

### **Acknowledgements**

All the online sources (and contributors) are gratefully acknowledged for their works partially or completely compiled in this practice material. The materials have been compiled strictly for classroom purposes.

-Narayan Prasad Sapkota

## Title Exploration

### Flax: Physical

**Flax :** a plant that has blue flowers and that is grown for its fiber and its seed (*aalas*)

**Golden Flax:** a variety of flax mostly popular for its bright yellow flowers.

### Flax: Cultural (French)

**Flax-Golden Tales:** a play on spinning thread or yarn, which could be golden like flax (*tisser de la laine*), and spinning tales (*raconter des histoires*).



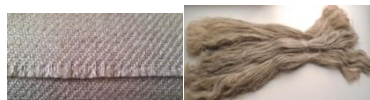
This is a reference to fairy stories (*magic-bean-buyer* = Jack and the Beanstalk). And in such tales, the heroine often has hair as golden as flax. In at least one (*Rumplestiltskin*), she spins straw into gold.

In French, there is also a reference to flax in hair colours: “cheveux de lin” means platinum blonde hair.

"In my mind's eye I pictured flax (the grain) with golden flowers, and him playing on the words, instead of spinning the grain, we would spin tales of lore. A true hint of the whimsical... a flax golden tale."

### Flax: Literary

**Flax-golden:** the idea of brightness or vividness



Tribhuvan University

Faculty of Management

BBS English I

Syllabus and Evaluation Model

Course Description

The BBS English course is a two-pronged English course emphasizing the core areas of reading and writing along with a strong communication component. It is designed to help students get ahead fast with their general English skills in interdisciplinary contexts with the lessons covering important vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing, listening and speaking skills for general and technical English. It is a theme-based course with comprehensive coverage of English language and critical thinking skills. Authentic listening and reading materials provide models for up to date language, grammar, and vocabulary.

The course has the following four main components:

I. Interdisciplinary Approach to Learning English

I. Functional English Language Texts

II. Reading for Writing

IV. Style

Prescribed Books

1. Nisani, M., and S. Lohani. Flax-Golden Tales: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Learning English. Shorter Editon. Kathmandu: Ekta, 2013. (Sounds of English and Stories and Poems on CD)
2. Savage, Alice, and Patricia Mayer. Effective Academic Writing 2: The Short Essay. Second Edition. Oxford: OUP, 2012.
3. Smalzer, Wiliam R. Write to be Read: Reading, Reflection, and Writing. Second Edition. Cambridge: CUP, 205.
4. Haynes, John. Style. London and New York: Routledge, 195.2

## **Evaluation**

Questions will be set covering all the prescribed books. The questions will be of three broad types:

1. Comprehensive/Analytical type: 2 questions each of 15 marks  
3 questions will be given  
 $2 \times 15 = 30$  marks
2. Descriptive/Short answer type: 5 questions each of 10 marks  
6 questions will be given  
 $5 \times 10 = 50$  marks
3. Brief/Objective type: 10 questions each of 2 marks  
12 questions will be given  
 $2 \times 10 = 20$  marks

The distribution of questions will be as follows:

1. Comprehensive/Analytical type:
  - one question from Flax-Golden
  - one question from Write to be Read
  - one question from Flax-Golden and/or Write to be Read
2. Descriptive/Short answer type:
  - one question from Flax-Golden
  - one question from Write to be Read
  - two questions from Short Essay • two questions from Style
3. Brief/Objective type:
  - two questions from Flax-Golden
  - two questions from Write to be Read
  - four questions from Short Essay
  - four questions from Style

Students will be tested on their ability to

- to apply the four levels of reading a text
- to write convincing paragraphs and essays
- to discover and communicate meaning holistically
- to write a variety of functional text types with a rhetorical focus matching content with style
- to show an understanding of grammar and vocabulary in context

A model question paper is given below, but it is to be borne in mind that it is just for giving a general idea of an exam paper and is not and does not aim to be exhaustive. It is just one of the many kinds of question papers that may be framed.

**Tribhuvan University**  
**Faculty of Management**  
**BBS First Year**  
**2071**

**C. English**

**Full Marks: 100**

**Time: 3 hours**

*Candidates are expected to answer the questions in their own words as far as practicable.  
The figures in the margin indicate full marks.*

**Answer all the questions.**

**Question 1. Answer any two of the following: (15 marks each)**

**(a) Read the following passage and answer the questions below:**

It is many months now since I found myself obliged by conscience to end my silence and to take a public stand against my country's war in Vietnam. The considerations which led me to that painful decision have not disappeared; indeed, they have been magnified by the course of events since then. The war itself is intensified; the impact on my country is even more destructive. I cannot speak about the great themes of violence and non-violence, of social change and of hope for the future, without reflecting on the tremendous violence of Vietnam. Since the spring of 1967, when I first made public my opposition to my government's policy, many persons have questioned me about the wisdom of my decision. "Why you?" they have said. "Peace and civil rights don't mix. Aren't you hurting the cause of your people?" And when I hear such questions, I have been greatly saddened, for they mean that the inquirers have never really known me, my commitment, or my calling. Indeed, that question suggests that they do not know the world in which they live.

In explaining my position, I have tried to make it clear that I remain perplexed—as I think everyone must be—by the complexities and ambiguities of Vietnam. I would not wish to underrate the need for a collective solution to this tragic war. I would wish neither to present North Vietnam or the National Liberation Front as paragons of virtue nor to overlook the role they can play in the successful resolution of the problem. While they both may have justifiable reasons to be suspicious of the good faith of the United States, life and history give eloquent testimony to the fact that conflicts are never resolved without trustful give-and-take on both sides. Since I am a preacher by calling, I suppose it is not surprising that I had several reasons for bringing Vietnam into the field of my moral vision. There is at the outset a very obvious and almost facile connection between the war in Vietnam and the struggle I and others have been waging in America.

*(Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "The Trumpet of Conscience")*

- i) Why did Dr. King feel that he had to clarify his position against the war?
- ii) Why didn't Dr. King feel the United States could solve the problems between the two sides in Vietnam by fighting there?
- iii) Why did Dr. King bring Vietnam into the field of his moral vision?
- iv) Was Dr. King as concerned about Vietnamese victims as he was about U.S. victims? Explain.

- v) When a government starts a war, its position is that it is acting justly and morally. If a citizen refuses to participate in the war because of personal moral principles, is he/she less moral than the government?

**Explain.**

- (b) Apply the four levels of reading a text to Ray Bradbury's "A Sound of Thunder" or Lekhanath Paudyal's "The Parrot in the Cage".
- (c) Who would you argue are more intelligent: men or women? Why? You can base your answer, if you wish, on Bertrand Russell's essay "Keeping errors at Bay".

**OR**

Are good manners a matter of how we look at ourselves or how we look at other people? Explain. You can use Dr. Peale's ideas as given in the essay "Courtesy: Key to a Happier World"

**Question 2. Answer any five of the following: (10 marks each)**

- (a) What do you think: If two people from two different linguistic groups, or religions, or tribes, or nationalities, or castes, fall in love, should they marry, even if their families are opposed? Give reasons for your answer.

- (b) Edit this paragraph for coherence.

English, like other languages, has conflicting sayings about important matters like love, friendship, and work. In English we say about work, "Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today." The message is that one can and should always work more—at least until all the work is done. In English we have this proverb: "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." The advice is not to work too much. Life without recreation makes one an uninteresting person. How is it that the language has two sayings that give opposite messages? We can assume that work is important to native English speakers. They respect it a lot—perhaps too much. The second saying may be a kind of safety valve. It warns people against going too far in following the advice of the first saying.

- (c) Describe a famous building or structure? Where is it? Who built it? When? What is it used for? What do you like or dislike about it?
- (d) Tell a story from your life that supports the saying, "Experience is the best teacher."
- (e) Explain the unconventional interpretation in each joke below:
- (i) STRAIGHT MAN: Would you call me a taxi, please.  
COMEDIAN: Okay. You're a taxi.
- (ii) STRAIGHT MAN: Who was that lady I saw you with last night.  
COMEDIAN: That was no lady. That was my wife.
- (f) A café owner wants to attract children to her café. She has devised an ice-cream dish with cream, chocolate sauce, and strawberries in it. Invent two different two-or three-word phrases for
- (i) the title for the café (specially catering for ice cream, for children)
- (ii) the name of the ice-cream (on the menu, containing cream, chocolate sauce, and strawberries)

**Question 3. Answer any ten of the following: (2 marks each)**

- (a) Condense the main point of Parijat's "New Year" into one sentence.
- (b) Edit the sentence: "He resembles his brother, who is such a handsome man, and who has been known for a long time to be a hard working kind of guy."
- (c) Choose the better of the two words shown in parentheses and rewrite each item as one sentence: "Some people feel that total honesty is essential in a loving relationship others feel it as dangerous to be completely honest. (however / therefore)"
- (d) The best meaning of the underlined phrase in the sentence: "I recognize this attitude as a healthy component of our survival instinct and one that enables us to carry on so we can make additional choices that sustain us." is
  - a. part of our will to live
  - b. part of the law of the world
  - c. part of our need to take care of others
- (e) Write down the topic and the controlling idea in the sentence: "There are several ways to reduce stress."
- (f) Write down four adjectives to describe the smell of a food.

**(g) Match the likely purpose to the audience:**

**Audience**

- 1. ----- friends
- 2. ----- younger relatives
- 3. ----- instructors
- 4. ----- employers

**Purpose**

- a. to show what I have learned
- b. to show my ability to do a job
- c. to teach by example
- d. to entertain

- (h) Rewrite the following headline, so as to make it less formal and more "tabloid":  
TEENAGERS BURN CAR
- (i) What does the word "halo" suggest in the sentence: "The rock singer sang in a halo of spotlight"?
- (j) Give any two content words along with their contexts.
- (k) Write the sentence "Once there was a poor widow" in four different ways as possible openings for a fairytale.
- (l) What is the effect of the mime in "with beaded bubbles winking at the brim"?

# Flax-Golden Tales

## An Interdisciplinary Approach to Learning English

Shorter Edition

### Summary with Four Levels of Interacting with Texts

#### Unit 1

#### Invitation



**Literal Comprehension:** This poem “Invitation” has been composed by 20th century American poet Shel Silverstein. The speaker in the poem invites different persons with different natures with them to accompany with her. He invites the readers who are imaginative as dreamers or even liars who always tell a lie. Hoppers who for something are prayer of religious deities or persons with magical power are invited to her. He even invites to the pretenders who pretend to be superior or greater to others. So who ever the readers are all are invited by the speaker to sit by him to spin **Flex Golden Tales**. The tales are more colorful and very much imaginative, adventurous and with many more outstanding qualities. He invites the readers for four times to accompany him unfolding **Flex-Golden Tales**.

**Interpretation:** The poem “Invitation” might be trying to create a good readerships in young generation. Modern young people are not so much interested in reading and enjoy in the literatures. May be they haven’t properly been invited to read. Not being interested in reading the children are more pretenders, liars, magic been players and so on. when they have inner desire for study they will start to read and will be co-readers to spin, colourful Flax-Golden Tales. The speaker’s intension seems to make readers and other people to be more imaginative, creative and have fun in literatures.

**Critical Thinking:** The basic intension of the poem seems to make people more creative and productive making a good habit of study. It has easily drawn the attention of different readers. With the repetitive structural pattern the poet seems to be able to convince the readers to go with him to spin some beautiful stories and nice pieces of literatures. The multiple use of ‘come’ has focused much on the importance of reading and value of good reader. How can one be more creative and interested in literatures if there is no passion with him? Only invitation without interest becomes useless. Still the poem seems to rise some keen interest for reading.



**Assimilation:** Before reading this poem I didn't have keen passion to literature. I had much interest in music, song and sports I used to think literature doesn't do any practical thing in our life. When I read this poem, I got an vision that literature, creative works are also the main sources of internal entertainment or happiness, Dreamer, liar, pretender, prayer all could be adjusted in the vast arena of literature. To spin **Flex-Golden tales** inspired me to enjoy the world of imagination, creativity, and vision, Our life can't always be charming if we don't love reading by heart.

## Unit 2

### Ancient Tales

#### Yudhishtira's Wisdom

**Source: The Mahabharata (Shanta R.Rao's adaptation)**



**Literal Comprehension:** Once in the exiled period five Pandav brothers grew thirty while running after a deer in the forest of Yaksha. In the hot weather they were tired and thirsty Yudhishtira sent his youngest brother Sahadeva in search of water. He came across a beautiful pond and ready to drink water hurriedly. Some voice stopped him from drinking until he could have given his questions' answers. Thinking it might be fancy he drank water. He soon got fainted. Similarly, Nakula, Bhima and Arjuna got the same fate lastly Yudhishtira himself went and found such condition of brothers. He waited admonition from drinking water after listening similar. He gave the answers of all questions asked by Yaksha until Yaksha became pleased. He promised to restore one of the brothers. For that Yudhishtira preferred Nakula with much pleasing reason. So Yaksha being happy restore all his brothers and gave blessing for easy and comfortable life of remaining exiled period.

**Interpretation:** This mythological story is taken from Mahabharata. The righteousness of Yudhishtira is the central point of this story. It focuses on wisdom; patience and loyalty to God are great human qualities. If we conduct any work rightly that has creative result. The story seems to tell that we must be faithful and honest on our work. If we have selfish and careless attitude, that ruins our personality in particular and humanity in general. Again, the reasonable and philosophical answers of the questions given by Yudhishtira can be knowledgeable. The due respect and love to the brother becomes another important meaning of this story.

**Critical Thinking:** The charming tale of Mahabharata seems to be philosophical and knowledge to any reader. Despite of its morality and simplicity of language there are some contradictory points in this story. At present, there is a question over the existence of God.

Some disagreeing points can be given asking question like: (a) can we see Yaksha in our life? (b) can sun shine with God's power? (c) Do god exist really? (d) Is it true having less anger means being happy? Etc. Still we can learn many more philosophy from this story.

**Assimilation:** Reading this text gave me new awareness. To be true human, we must have wisdom and righteousness. We learn that we should forsake pride, anger, desires, etc. to be happy and satisfied in our life. I have learnt to change myself changing my thinking as well.

## **The Brave Little Parrot**

**Source: Buddhist Legend (Rafe Martin's Adaptation)**



**Literal Comprehension:** Once Buddha was born as a little parrot. In the forest where various animals and birds lived, while all the creatures were spending happy life, a storm and lightening turned the forest into fire. Helpless animals and birds were trapped in the fire. It was terrible picture where birds and animals were crying for help. Seeing that situation the little parrot started to put out the fire by dipping into river and spreading the drops of water into the fire. Though it got burnt all parts of his body the parrot still continued doing the work. Seeing such foolishness of parrot Gods in heaven laughed. But one of the Gods became ready to help him by changing himself into a golden eagle. The parrot didn't like eagle's advice rather help when the eagle told the parrot to stop doing that work. So, the eagle began to weep weave upon weave until the fire was put out completely. By the mercy of God all the animals and plants were saved in that forest and there was greenery everywhere. All the animals expressed their gratitude to brave little parrot that saved them.

**Interpretation:** Since the story is based on Buddhist Legend it tells much about human kindness, love and help. It tells us we should love and help as far as we can selflessly. If we do selfless help, God loves us. Again, another meaning can be that we should always struggle a lot whether it is fruitful or not. Keep on doing struggle but don't expect the fruit is its lesson. The good deeds of parrot are praiseworthy that are seen by the god as well. Those who have experienced the bitter life or suffering can understand others well. So rich and aristocratic people never understand the actual pain of poor and common people.

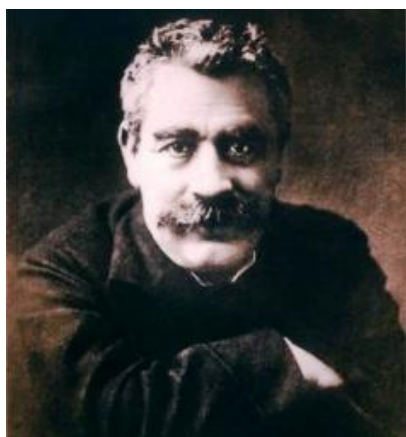
**Critical thinking:** The story teaches us to do selfless service and help to other as moral lesson. Though in philosophy such concept is suitable and impressive but in our practical life such feeling is impossible because people don't have strong faith on God. Some disagreeing points are: (a) Is it possible for a man to be born as a parrot? (b) Do we really believe on the

existence of god ? (c) Can pouring tear put out forest fire? Besides these some of the confusing points the story has praiseworthy ideas. Teaching human to help others selflessly and be kind and helpful are humane. This aspect of this story is really acceptable and heart touching one.

**Assimilation :** I got extreme influence after reading this story “The Brave Little Parrot” and knew that we must be like the little parrot. While innocent and poor people are doing honest and dutiful works but so called reach people do everything with selfish motive. Reach are indifferent to the suffering of poor. Still the right conduct of parrot teaches us more to do similar type of behaviours in our life as will. If we help others without selfish nature, there will be someone ready to help us. These concept germinated or came in me after reading these mythological story “The Brave Little Parrot”

## **If Not Higher**

**Poland, adapted by Peretz**



**Literal Comprehension:** Early every Friday morning, at the time of penitential prayer, the Rabbi of Nemirov disappared. He wasn't found at home too. People thought, he went to the heaven at that time. But a Litvak didn't believe it. He decided to find the truth. He secretly went to the Rabbi's room and watched every activity of the Rabbi during the night before fore Friday. In the next morning, the Rabbi left the home as a peasant aut of the city. Litvak secretly follow him. In the forest, he chops a tree and made a bundle of sticks. He come back to the city with the bundle of sticks and sold it to a sick Jewish woman on credit. He also helped to burn the fire. while burning fire, he recited different portions and penitential prayers. Litvak was impressed by the Rabbi's action and become his disciple.

**Interpretation:** This story tells us that the heaven is there where one finds pleasure of helping poor, sick and old person. The true spirit of religion is to help others. It isn't only limited to going to Temples and Churches and worship or pray Gods and Goddesses. One can please God by helping the helpless ones.

**Critical Thinking:** This religious story raises some doubts in my mind. In the story, it is said that a religious leader goes to help a sick and old woman at the time of prayer. Can we really find such person in this materialistic world? It also talks about the heaven high in the sky. Is there really heaven? Next, It says one can get heavenly pleasure by serving others or by sacrificing one's pleasures. For other can we really apply it in our lives?

**Assimilation:** This story has impressed me a lot and has also taught a good lesson. Before reading this story, I used to think only about the heaven where one can go after his/her death. But now, I know that the heaven is also here in Earth. I have a great desire now to serve the humanity and reach the heaven like Rabbi.

### Unit 3

#### Education

#### Why Go to University



**Literal Comprehension:** “Why Go to University” is an essay by Moti Nissani. This essay gives emphasis on the importance of higher education. Education is the third eye of human being. An uneducated person can see water in the river but an educated person can see the electricity on it. Education is the light of life. It removes darkness from mind and fills knowledge. In this essay, Nissani talks about the importance of university education.

A better educated people can get better job more easily than less educated person. He can earn more income and maintain good living standard. He can live happy and comfortable life. Not only that educated people are the manpower of the nation and they can make country also rich by utilizing the natural resources.

Education provides us knowledge and knowledge is power. An educated person is likely to resolve the difficulties and conflicts in a rational manner. Educated people are wise, tolerant, and they also realize their mistakes. Educated people take better care of their health. They are more likely to enjoy better health than tycoons. They know the disadvantages of smoking, fatness, tension, lack of exercise, imbalanced food, unhygienic atmosphere, over eating, stale food and air etc. they try to stay far from these health problems.

Educated people are also aware of the benefit of physical exercise. They well know the proverb ‘sound mind in a sound body’. So they do regular exercise and try to keep them always feet and strong. One survey shows that educated men and women are valued and respected in the society. A man might be handsome, kind, strong, brave, hero etc. he would still be considered in some ways deficient. The lack of education damages his life. But the better educated person is the better he feels about himself.

Educated people are curious about new thing and new places. They are lover of knowledge and civilized and well cultured. They take knowledge; reward and they feel comfortable from their living. Going to University expands our social horizons. We meet new people, make new friends and share new experiences. Education also helps for friendship and personal

growth. Education increases our personal freedom. Educated people are less dogmatic. They don't hesitate to fight and die if anyone tries to grab their rights and freedom.

Educated people have also knowledge of the universe. Today modern people believe that the earth moves and the sun is still. Education and democracy are closely related. Democracy flourishes only in the educated society. It doesn't exist if people are ignorant and selfish. So education is supremely Important and valuable.

**Interpretation:** This essay may be trying to show the value of education. It shows that education is very important. The writer also says that University education is very necessary to live happy, comfortable and meaningful; life. It fulfills our desire for learning and quenches the thirst of knowledge. It also helps for career development and also for the development of citizens, society and country.

**Critical thinking:** This essay is very much impressive because education is considered supremely valuable. However I am not agree with few ideas of the writer. Is only formal education important? Can't we become educated through informal education? Do all the educated people respected as much as rich businessman and powerful politicians? So I don't agree with the writer.

**Assimilation:** This essay impressed me very much. Before reading this story, I don't know the value of formal education and University degree. But this essay inspired me to study well to take university degree. Now, I have decided to become a scholar to have comfortable through learning.

### **Don't Cut Down The Trees, Brother Woodcutter**

**Balkrishna Sama (1902 – 1981) | Translated by Michael Hutt**



**Literal Comprehension:** The poem “Don't Cut Down the Trees, Brother Woodcutter” is composed by Nepali poet Bal Krishna Sama. The main theme of the poem is about conservation of nature. Specially, the poet argues that trees are very important in our lives and they need to be protected. The poet considers the trees as our dead mother who are silent observers, but they protect us from natural calamities. The poet personifies the tree. The tree is like our mother that is around us and takes care of us. When we remember our childhood, we find that most of the time we play around the tree. It gives us fruits and flowers as if our mother cares us. Thus, no child is hungry. Their leafy lips kiss us and when they feel tired,

they sigh and weep. They never speak a word. They are able to tolerate and their pains and grieves are only for our sake. They never complain.

Further, the poet says that in winter the family sits around the fire burnt from the wood, and sing and talk. In the winter, the trees are covered with white frost that makes them bow at us. Nevertheless, we are ignorant. We do not understand all the sacrifices and tolerance that the trees endure to sustain our lives. They silently and secretly pass the cold nights dreaming of our happy and cheerful days we spent during our childhoods under their guardianship. They also hear us singing the songs they had taught us. They bless our laughter all the time. They always love us. But, they cannot express their inner thoughts to us. It does not mean that they are lifeless, ignorant and thoughtless. They wait for us until winter ends. As soon as spring arrives, they again spread out their arms and appeal us not to cut off their arms.

**Interpretation:** In this pro-environment poem, the poet is trying to be more concerned with the pressing problems of deforestation and environmental degradation. He repeats the idea of considering the earth and its plants as respectful and forgiving to us, the selfish humans who ceaselessly fell down trees for fulfilling their present needs. The poet is indirectly criticizing the human act of clearing the lands, thus, making the life of our children and grandchildren insecure. The trees need to be saved for our future in case the human species may become extinct.

**Critical Thinking:** The poem “Don’t Cut Down the Trees, Brother Woodcutter” has contemporary message to all the generation. Keeping the environment balance is the utmost property for the benefit of human beings. Some of the ideas presented in this poem are not common to cover all sorts of ecological parts. For instance, those who live in hot place do they find frost on the top of the trees during winter?

**Assimilation:** After reading this poem, once I felt to think of our dense forest found in Terai belt. There was “Charkose Jhadi” which was the great economic source of Nepal. Now we do not find it. If the then government was alerted like the poet Sama even nowadays we could find that dense forest. Thus, I appeal citizens and the government to conserve the forest whatever is left for our future generation.

### **Don’t cut down the trees, brother woodcutter**

Balakrishna Sama (1902-1981)

(Translated by Michael Hutt)

#### **I. *Literal Comprehension***

Context: This poem has been written by Balakrishna Sama (1902-1981). He was a dramatist par excellence, a performing artist, painter, sculptor, poet, essayist, novelist and short story writer. In this poem, he has advocated of nature conservation.

The speaker of the poem is trying to persuade the woodcutter not to cut down the trees. Therefore, he calls the woodcutter ‘brother’ and tries to establish emotional attachment with the trees using the phrase ‘dead mothers’. He requests the woodcutter not to cut down the trees because they provide us with the motherly love and care. They protect us from the sun and the rain, seat us on their laps, carry us in their arms and shoulders, give us fruits and flowers, and kiss our foreheads with leafy lips. They also weep for us, but they cannot speak



and plead with us. In winter, we sit around the fire and enjoy the warmth inside our homes. We sleep soundly in our warm beds all night, but the trees keep standing outside frostbitten to look after us like mothers of newly born babies. They only cannot express their inner feelings for us. But as soon as spring comes the trees attract us by their beauty.

## **II. Interpretation**

This poem might be trying to tell us that we should save the trees because they are very much useful to us. They provide us with various everyday basic requirements. Therefore, the trees are like our dead mothers. It means they support and take care of us but cannot express their inner feelings for us. In this way, the poet has given the rank of ‘mother’ to nature and has emphasized the need for conserving it.

## **III. Critical Thinking**

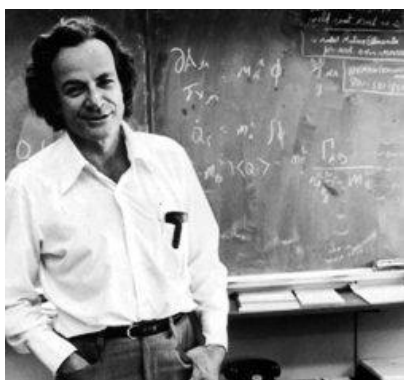
I support the poet’s idea for nature conservation. The trees should not be cut down. But is it possible for us to sit around the fire for warmth in winter without cutting down them? In fact, the poet has forgotten to check the reality in an effort to create a world of his imagination. He has imagined the trees as our ‘dead mothers’. But his imagination of the trees as dozing off like a newly born baby’s mother is too much of its kind. How can ‘dead mothers’ show all kinds of emotion for us? How can the trees have dreams like a person?

## **IV. Assimilation**

This poem has taught me to treat the trees and plants as living beings. Therefore, I will not cut down the trees in future. I will also encourage others to conserve the trees. Now I have understood that conserving trees is after all helping save my own existence.

## **Surely You Are Joking, Mr. Feynman**

**Richard P. Feynman, USA (1918 – 1988)**



**Literal Comprehension:** After passing his under-graduation from MIT taking Physics, the narrator Mr. Feynman was suggested to go to other colleges by Professor Slater to understand the rest of the world but he was quite unfamiliar in system of Princeton College. Then Feynman went to Princeton College where everything was fully formal. On the first day, Eisenhart gave new student tea party. Feynman was not mannered and formal person who answered to have both lemon and cream teas. She told Feynman was joking about it by saying ‘‘Surely You’re Joking Mr. Feynman’’ because it was taken as a social error.

After that he went to Cyclotron where everything was left open to do. He started to take part in philosophical discussion and sometimes in biological groups as well as physics classes. He spent lots of time in biological work. He also did research on a phase and discovered the double mutation process. His that discovery made him popular among the biology students. Later he was invited to Harvard University to give a lecture for biology. Despite of his hard work and discovery of new thing in biology, he could not be satisfied. Though he knew and did a lot about the biology and other subjects, but his actual interest was in physics. So he expected he would go back to physics sooner.

**Interpretation:** This essay tells us that there should be thirst of knowledge and progress in one's mind to get their intended things. For it, one should also pay great labor to be successful in chosen field. This essay suggests how the education can be gained and what can be the best technique. Memorization and subject of inner interest are different and opposite things, the former is not the productive one. It also tells about the significance of interdisciplinary subject study. It portrays that education is the only key to learn about manner, culture, and knowledge in any multiple subjects.

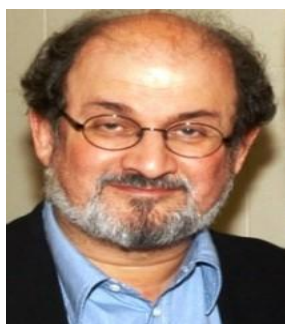
**Critical thinking:** It is sure that for the readers this essay is quite difficult to understand by the students beyond science faculty, it is because it contains the jargons that are used in scientific text. The crux if the essay is easier, but the presentation and language is, so one must be multidisciplinary to understand it because there is description about biology, physics, philosophy and as well as about other subjects. The passion of the writer for study and progress even in lack of tools and resources gives the good lesson to us. The writer became multidisciplinary in the lack of tools and resources. Is it possible to be multi-talented for all people in the lack of tools and resources? If it is difficult for the students of other faculty who are not from science background, why is this essay kept here in the management faculty?

**Assimilation:** Thought the presentation and content of this essay is difficult to understand, it taught me a lesson that one should be dynamic and should have continuous effort to achieve your desired goal though you may lack the physical resources or somebody flatters you.

According to different situations and societies, Prof. Slater's suggestions to go in another college to meet the rest of the world is to try to understand multiple subjects and sectors of the life. I used to be bounded in studying of my subjects only but after reading this I came to know that nothing can be done with limited boundary of knowledge and people should be versatile/multidisciplinary in terms our knowledge.

## **A 1996-Commencement Speech**

### **Salman Rushdie, India (1947)**





**Literal Comprehension:** In 'A 1996 Commencement Speech' Salman Rushdie talks about human rights. He also suggests not to bow against falsehood and conspiracy. When Jean Kirkpatrick was chosen as a speaker, the American students boycotted his speech and staged a sit in. While giving the speech, Rushdie remembers the day when he graduated from Cambridge University in 1968. He was denied the degree accusing him of hurling dirty gravy of a bucket on the wall. So, Rushdie had to bow his head to the feet of VC to beg for the degree which was rightfully his. Now when he remembers his past, he can't forgive himself for his passivity supplication and compromise with injustice. Rushdie also learned that injustice is the business of being forced to beg for what is rightfully yours. Rushdie also suggests his students not to accept injustice and not to surrender in front of inhumanity and falsehood for your rights. He also admires Bard College for offering him refugee on the basis of intellectual solidarity and human injustice. He suggests defying even gods if they limit your thoughts, rights, freedom and lives. According to him, a person should be guided by his/her best natures.

**Interpretation:** The writer may be trying to focus on the importance of justice, rights, freedom and personal thoughts. In his speech, Rushdie suggests the students also not to accept injustice and not to surrender in front of inhumanity and stand up for our rights. He suggests defying even gods if they are injustice and if they limit our thoughts, rights, freedom and lives. He also views that a person should always keep up his good thoughts and best natures for self respect.

**Critical thinking:** Although his essay is interesting, suggestive, instructive and satirical, some ideas of the writer are doubtful. How can we defy gods in practice? Is it good to be sarcastic of the university from where we get graduation degree?

**Assimilation:** I am very much affected from this speech of Rushdie. It reminded me my own past. I have also bowed down my head to the feet of injustice many times in the past to get what was rightfully mine. But this speech made me feel regret for what I have done. It also inspired me not to accept any kind of domination, injustice and inhumanity.

## Unit: 4

### Actions and Consequences

#### The Parrot In The Cage

Lekhanath Paudyal (1885 – 1966)

Translated by Laxmi Prasad Devkota



**Literal Comprehension:** Lekhanath Poudel composed the poem “The Parrot in the Cage”. The theme of the poem is about freedom, justice, happiness and serenity. The poem is a bitter satire on the then Rana regime that deprived Nepalese people freedom. The speaker has carefully painted the conditions that surround the parrot’s life. The speaker is disappointed by the harsh reality of man’s life. Away from its family, home, kin, friends, and the natural freedom man has forced the parrot to live a tragic life. Similar is the condition of the human life in Nepal of that period. Being a worshipper of nature, Poudel expresses his deep affinity to the natural world that provides him childhood appetite, which he wants in his later life. Having compelled to live away from his family, home and friends, Poudel pines for it and expresses nostalgia towards it. Finally, through the medium of parrot, voices of political, social, religious, spiritual and habitual life style and situation of human beings are exhumed in the poem. The poem clearly advocates the human instinct to live a free and struggled life away from the crowd.

**Interpretation:** In this poem “The Parrot in the Cage”, the poet is trying to advocate the freedom of people in the Rana regime. The Nepalese people had been ruled by the Ranas for one hundred and four years. During this period, people were deprived of enjoying all kinds of freedom. The speaker in the poem is disappointed by the harsh reality of man’s life. Besides, man has been found to live away from his family, home, kin, friends, and the spiritual freedom that surround him in the rural life. Thus, man has been forced to live a caged life like the parrot. Man’s indifference to animal’s plight and the mentality of getting entertainment from imprisoning lower animals has been criticized in the poem. Living away from the nature man has invited more tragedy and sorrow in his life.

**Critical thinking:** The speaker has carefully painted the conditions that surround the parrot’s life. Through the plight of the parrot, the speaker compares the sorrowful description of human life, lack of justice and freedom, the aggression and the cruelty prevalent in the

society. Being a worshipper of nature, Poudel expresses his deep affinity to the natural world that provides him childhood appetite, which he wants in his later life. Having compelled to live away from his family, home and friends, Poudel pines for it and expresses nostalgia towards it. More than that, Hindu tradition to pray and appeal God at the time of difficulty is spread all over the poem. In the philosophical level, the poem may be faultless, but I have reservation towards the voices of the parrot. In real life, does a parrot speak like human to express his sorrows?

**Assimilation:** After reading this poem, I have realized that how cruel the Rana regime was. I always stand for the freedom of the human beings. As Jean-Jacques Rousseau said, “Man is born free and wants to live free”. Thus, I request all the human beings not to capture any animal as well as not any citizens at the name of ruling system or any pleasure.

### **The parrot in the cage**

- Lekhanath Paudyal (1885-1966)

(Translated by Laxmi Prasad Devkota)

#### ***I. Literal Comprehension***

Context. Originally written in Nepali as '*Pinjadaa ko Sugaa*' by Lekhanath Paudyal, celebrated as the poet laureate of Nepal, this poem was translated into English by Laxmi Prasad Devkota, the *Mahaakavi* (great poet) of Nepali literature. Written in a classical form, this poem has compelled us to rethink about the world through the point of view of a caged parrot.

The parrot, the speaker of this poem, has been captivated in an iron cage. He has lost his peace of mind and restful situation. Since his parents and relatives are in the forest far away, he cannot share his unpleasant laments to them. He jumps like a mad creature with teary and swollen eyes, and feels like a corpse without its soul when he recalls the pleasures he used to have in the forest. He wandered in the forest freely, eating wild fruits happily. Now, he has lost the affection of his parents and relatives and his free movements. He has been confined in a narrow cage, and doesn't see any friend around to rely on. He has been defeated with blunt beak and cramped wings and feet while trying to break the iron cage open. He is now shocked and doesn't want to speak, but the people who have confined him show him a cane and force him to speak. They do not provide him with enough quality food and water. They humiliate him very much. He thinks that his ability to talk the human language and to reason, which he took as his virtues before, are the sources of his woe.

Finally, he concludes that human beings do not like the fairness and good virtues. They exploit the worthy. Therefore, he expresses his wish to God that he would not be reborn as a parrot as long as the human beings remain on earth.

#### ***II. Interpretation***

The poet indicates through the poem that human beings often treat animals and birds unfairly. They are not sensitive enough towards the sufferings of animals and birds while captivating them for humanly pleasures. The poet might also be trying to tell us that there is nothing in

the world as important as freedom. Unless one is free, one cannot enjoy anything else in the world. Therefore, the greatest asset in one's life is freedom. Not only that, the poet might also be trying to make us aware of possible danger or harm if we have 'power of speech' and 'reasoning'. A dumb person doesn't know anything about what's going on around him or her. S/he doesn't know the value of dignity and freedom. But one with reasoning cannot accept slavery of any kind and has to suffer very much in life.

### ***III. Critical Thinking***

While appreciating the use of smooth, simple and mellifluous language in the poem, I disagree with the poet on some issues. Is it possible for a bird to speak the human language so wittily? Are all the human beings torturers only to the animals and birds? Aren't there the people who advocate of animal rights? These questions arose in my mind after reading this poem. I also feel that the poem contains too much of fatalism. We all know that lamenting for one's past mistake and expressing hopelessness do not help one to solve the problem. The parrot should have thought about his situation a bit more critically and found out the way to set himself free. There are also too many repetitions of the same words and ideas in the poem.

### ***IV. Assimilation***

The poem has taught me that even birds have some sense of their situation. Therefore, I am not going to captivate any bird. I now know there is nothing like freedom in one's life. I will always value it above all things in my life.

## **A Sound of Thunder**

**Ray Bradbury, USA (1920 – 2012)**



**Literal Comprehension:** The hunting Safari started with hunter Eckles, a rich businessman, Travis, guide and other two persons. The Safari was for hunting a huge dinosaur Tyrannosaurus Rex. They were in a Time Machine that would give them the information of prehistoric past, present and future. The Time Safari INC had managed that hunting with its rules and system. When they were in Time Machines Travis told others about the ecosystem. He told if rat is killed eventually it would destroy fox, lion to civilization. Eventually, they saw the Tyrannosaurus ray that frightened Eckels much. He became too much nervous. It was very huge, ten tons heavy. Eckels was discouraged, not able to kill it. When the animal breathed there was a thunder. When the guide allowed Eckels to kill but went out of the track.

Travis and next guide guide killed the animal that made a sight like the fall of mountain. Travis warned Eckels not obeying rules and his order. When coming to the present state from the past in time machine Eckels found great change took place. When they returned to time safari office, nothing was changed except alphabets in the signboards of the office. Instead of Keithm, Deutscher was the president of America. Eckels found a dead butterfly on the bottom of his boot that made such change in course of time. Eckels requested the guide, travels to bring him back to past so he would repair the damage of butterfly. Travis said that was impossible. At the end there was shot of Travis but who was shot with the sound of thunder was not clear. The story ends “there was a sound of thunder.”

**Interpretation:** This story “A Sound of Thunder” is an example of science fiction. This story might be trying to focus on the destruction of ecosystem and environmental mechanism due to carelessness of human actions. The use of time machine and its misuse points out the man’s inability to handle the advanced technology. People are with various technologies yet they are not able to make proper handling of them. Next interpretation of the story might be a critique to modern society and the nature of human beings. In the name of humanity rich people are ready to extinct rare species (animal). And to earn money people are ready to destroy ecosystem and animal’s world. We can also interpret to “A Sound of Thunder” as blast and destruction of environmental system. Again, the “butterfly effect” may be another interdependent meaning of the story. This means a destruction of a butterfly may create earth shaking effect long with the ecosystem and balance. Chaos Theory has interpreted this way. In ecosystem the extinct of a mouse may starve a fox that makes to starve vulture and insects that will bring problem to care men and human race and a civilization ultimately. This essence of environmental closeness is presented in the story.

**Critical thinking:** This story gives a message about human existence, ecology and animal world. Human selfishness and carelessness have become main causes of destruction of nature all people are fully money-minded and ready to-do anything for money and ready to destroy any species for the fun with the money. Still, we can be disagreed with some points. Is it possible disagreed to travel into past and future being in present? If it is possible to see about future, wouldn’t it be very fruitful to take preventions of so many problems to arrive? But, the destruction of eco-system, butterfly-effects and human carelessness are very much remarkable points mentioned here.

**Assimilation:** As I was reading this story, I felt as if I was watching a thrilling film. I also became very much puzzled how the people in safari could go in past and future. What time machine really was. As the quality of science fiction I got some beneficial points. I knew that our little mistake in the destruction of any creature like a butterfly may lead to have violent destruction eventually. It touched me a lot looking people who shot rare animals for fun and Safari Company was ready to do what rich people wanted to have because they could earn the money. The money-minded and stonehearted modern people made me feel very sad.

## No Smoke From The Chimneys

Siddhicharan Shrestha (1912 – 1992)

(Translated by Michael Hutt)



**Literal Comprehension:** The poem “No Smoke from the Chimneys” is written by famous Nepali poet Siddhicharan Shrestha (1912 – 1992) and translated by Michael Hutt into English. In this poem the poet has expressed a freedom fighter as the speaker. The speaker tells that he is busy wiping up blood from a broken head so that Death not to call him. The people who are engaging in the protest against the monopolized political entity are seriously injured, but they are not afraid. The people are not caring to food for freedom and justice; they have no time for cooking. Therefore, nothing including the Lady’s (Death’s) calling can stop the speaker’s advancing feet or distract him from taking part in the protest.

**Interpretation:** The speaker of this poem may be trying to express that freedom is more important than food or fear of death. Therefore, people do not get diverted or stop when they once have come out of their house to the streets. This poem is all about politics which describes a time when the Nepalese people were fighting for democracy against the Rana regime.

**Critical Thinking:** While appreciating the speaker’s idea in poem, I did not like the name ‘Lady’ used for death. In our society, the word ‘lady’ means nice and sincere women who deserve respect and value. But the speaker of the poem has shown Death as a beautiful lady. This isn’t quite matching. The title of the poem has unable to reflect the real mood of the speaker.

**Assimilation:** Now I know how the Nepalese people fought against the autocratic rule for the freedom. The death could not discourage them from establishing democracy in the country. Otherwise, my generation would not have been enjoying the freedom.

**No smoke from the chimneys**  
Siddhicharan Shrestha (1912-1992)  
(Translated by Michael Hutt)

### **I. *Literal Comprehension***

Context. This poem is written by a famous Nepali poet Siddhicharan Shrestha (1912-1992) and translated by Michael Hutt into English. In this poem the poet has chosen a freedom fighter as the speaker.

The speaker tells Death not to call him because he is busy wiping up blood from a broken head. People who are taking part in the protest programme against the dictatorship are seriously injured, but they are not afraid. The people are fighting for freedom and justice even without food because they have no time for cooking. Therefore, nothing including the Lady's (Death's) calling can stop the speaker's advancing feet or distract him from taking part in the protest.

## **II. Interpretation**

The speaker of this poem may be trying to tell us that freedom is more important than food or fear of death. Therefore, once the people have come out of their houses to the streets that they do not stop or get distracted. This is a political poem that describes a time when the Nepalese people were struggling for democracy against the Rana regime.

## **III. Critical Thinking**

While appreciating the speaker's idea in the poem, I did not like the name 'Lady' used for death. In our society, the word 'lady' is a respect used for a nice woman. But the speaker of the poem has imagined Death as a beautiful lady. This is quite shocking. Moreover, the title of the poem has been unable to reflect the real mood of the speaker.

## **IV. Assimilation**

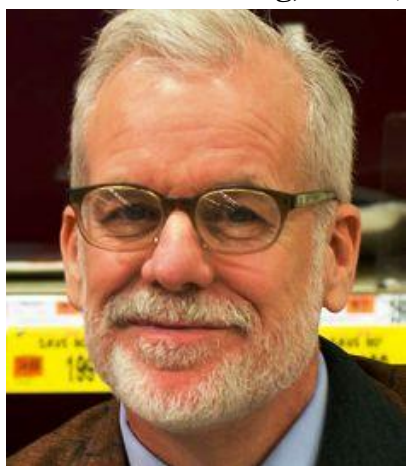
Now I know how the Nepalese people fought against the autocratic rule. The death could not deter them from establishing democracy in the country. Otherwise, my generation would not have been enjoying the freedom.

# **Unit 5**

## **Television**

### **The Wretched Stone**

**Chris Van Allsburg, USA (1949-)**





**Literal comprehension:** After completing all its preparation a big cargo ship Rita Anne started her Voyage with fine environment. Every present crew were enjoying by reading books storytelling, etc. After four weeks they reached to an island which was very strange because there were no fruits in the plants, there was no sign of human life. There was bad smelling air and bitter water falling from fountains. They found a strange stone with shining one side that was giving light from there. They kept the stone in the ship and started their further journey. When crews were free they used to watch it. All sailors forgot their jobs and duties and rarely spoke each other. They always sat in front of the stone. They started to walk like animal, didn't understand the language spoken by the captain. The captain made a secret plan to throw the stone in to the sea. Soon a storm occurred where captain alone was controlling the ship. Other crews were busy in watching TV (Stone). Later the captain change them by playing music, reading books and telling stories. The ones who could read changed faster then who couldn't later all were rescued by another ship.

**Interpretation:** This metaphorical story might be telling many things. Here the stone, ape stands for modern non-creative people. According to the writer being crazy to TV. People are careless to their responsibilities and duties. Watching TV is non-productive and uncreative work. There can be other ways to get entertainment like reading, singing story telling etc. We must be dutiful and punctual to get success in our life. Again the story might also try to tell us that we give less focus to our other important works while watching TV. TV itself is the cause of change in our good manners and attitudes. The title "The Wretched Stone" indicates the stone that gives lot of tensions and problems. This means people get more problems than benefits in watching TV. As we are away from the TV, we can be more creative, mannered and real human beings.

**Critical Thinking:** After reading this story I became so much disagree with the ideas given as the negative aspects of TV in total. Modern science and technological inventions have made our life facilitated and comfortable. Among them TV is one most useful tool. As it is given in this story TV is the not really so useless. We can know about the world, new inventions, knowledge skills and so much ideas using TV. We can world in front of TV set. How can any person become ape watching TV? Can we really become careless and duty-free watching TV? Can we reject the number of information and knowledge we get from TV? No doubt TV itself is not bad if we use it selectively and appropriately. There are many more advantages along with few disadvantages of using TV.

**Assimilation:** The story influenced me a lot. When we see the misusages of TV in our daily life, we can see similar situation. School children become crazy to non-creative programs. They should be interested about study. Most of housewives normally watch TV and kill their important time without any creative work. No doubt, if we can't use TV properly, we can be meaningless and non-creative like the apes. The metaphorical presentation of TV as a stone made me to be careful in watching TV to find whether it has destroyed me or given creativity.

### **The wretched stone**

- Chris Van Allsburg, USA (1949- )

*(Excerpts from the log of the Rita Anne by Randall Ethan Hope, Captain)*

#### **I. Literal Comprehension**

Context: This story is written by Chris Van Allsburg, an American writer and illustrator of children's books. This is an allegory, a story with visible symbols for an abstract idea, written



in the form of a diary entries, which begins on May 8 and ends on July 12. Therefore, the sub-title of the story is 'Excerpts from the log of the Rita Anne (a ship's name)'. The narrator of the story is Captain Randall Ethan Hope.

When the supplies were brought into the ship, it started its voyage on a fine day with clear sky and fair winds. Mr Howard, the first mate, brought a group of sailors, who read books a lot and played musical instruments, on board. They passed their free time singing, dancing, and telling stories. On June 5, almost a month after they had started their journey, they discovered an unknown island. They stopped there and explored the island. They found strange and unexpected things there. They also found a two feet long rock, roughly textured, gray in colour, and unbelievably heavy. A surface of the rock was flat and as smooth as glass that emitted a beautiful glowing light, pleasing to look at.

After the rock had been brought on board, the crew was fascinated by its peculiar light. They stopped telling the stories or dancing or playing the music and kept on gazing at the rock. After some days, the sailors started showing strange symptoms. They had fever and started shrieking. They also lost interest in their work. The captain decided to throw the strange rock into the sea, but the next day he found all his crew members locked inside a room with it. They did not want him to throw the rock.

When the sky was covered with dark clouds and a dangerous storm headed towards the ship, the captain became hopeless because his sailors sat around the rock and left him alone with the trouble. Moreover, when he forced them to open the closed door he found that they were no more human beings. The whole crew had turned into hairy apes grinning at the terrible rock and unable to understand his language. When the storm was gone, the ship was still afloat but the masts and the rudder were lost. Because of the lightning that had hit the ship twice, the stone had gone dark.

The captain discovered that playing music and reading books to the crew would have a positive effect on them. Then, he read stories to them and turned them into human beings again. Those who could read themselves recovered faster. He covered the rock and kept it closed in a compartment. When another ship came to rescue them, he set a fire on the ship and sent the rock down to the bottom of the sea. Finally, they decided not to talk about the rock anymore.

## ***II. Interpretation***

The writer has used a symbol in the story. It's the rock that stands for a television set. Before the TV set was discovered, people talked, sang, danced, and amused each other. They stopped talking to each other when they started gazing at the TV set. They became lazy and inactive. They stopped behaving and thinking like human beings and turned into imitating apes. They can be restored if TV sets are thrown and the habit of reading books can be inculcated into them.

### ***III. Critical Thinking***

The story has raised some critical questions in my mind. Is TV so much useless as the writer thinks? Doesn't it provide us a chance to get knowledge about various fields and news from around the globe? Is it possible to throw TV sets from the modern households? I'm sure the writer will be in trouble with these questions.

### ***IV. Assimilation***

The story is very much amusing and close to the reality. Nowadays, I see modern people of all age groups sitting around their TV sets and shrieking or grinning. Especially school-going children and youths have lost interest in their studies, and keep themselves busy on watching television. It's a worrisome situation, but I don't think throwing the TV sets will solve this problem.

## **TV Can Be A Good Parent**

**Ariel Gore, USA (1970)**



**Literal Comprehension:** This essay “TV can be good Parent” is written by an American mother Ariel Gore. In this essay, she has described about the condition when TV becomes parent of co-parents for kids by making reaction to the guidelines given by the American Academy of Pediatrics. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) gives new guidelines for parents telling that letting kids under the age of 2 to watch TV is harmful. Instead of worrying about more important issues such as welfare and poverty; AAP is worried about children watching TV. The writer Gore defends this idea telling that TV set can be a good parent to single parent family where the parent had to go to job leaving their children at home. In single parent family when there is no to take care of children, TV set can be parent for them. To defend this idea she talks about her own personal life.

In 1970's, when Gore was child, there was not TV set in her home. Her mother called TV set a “Boob Tube”. Her mother did not have to pay so much rent for room and had friends that all took care of children by helping eachother. However, those days were in 1970 and this is 1980. She herself now has become mother and has to go office leaving her daughter with TV set. That has become an injustice according to AAP because the research shows that the

young children need more interaction with their parents and care givers. Due to this, the kids should have lost of direct interaction with their parents and care givers but it does not mean that she /he never talks to anyone, Gore says that she would understand if AAP if AAP discouraged children from watching much TV all the day and all night, according to her watching a little TV during a day to give their parent a break is not going to kill or make them dumb. She insists that they should be more worried about having shows like “Jerry Springer” while young child is in room with them.

She says that direct interaction with the people is far better than anything. But she is forced to leave her daughter in front of TV program to go for jobs. Some programs like “BLUES CLUES” make children interactive not passive ones. So there must be programs for the betterment of kids. A survey shows that parents having direct interaction and spending more time with children is better than anything to them. But TV set can be like a good parent or co-parent in special condition when the parent can’t give time to children. Better care of the children can be given with a direct care, interaction etc but all single parent can’t give much time due to their poor economic condition. Gore also does not feel that TV set is the greatest thing in the world for little kids for anyone. She says that much more educational programs is needed for kids to end culture of war and violence. Along with it she argues that if the government provides the salaries to all housewives, they can spend maximum time with their kids and they can give more time to care and interact etc. Until such management is provided, TV by compulsion becomes parent or co-parent of children.

**Interpretation:** This essay is based on usefulness of TV, especially to poor single mothers. Many mothers are compelled to work outside for sustaining their life and the life of the family, in such condition, there’s nobody to take care of the children and it becomes inevitable for mothers to make their children watch television. Thought the mothers love their children, to feed and to run their house they had to work. In the essay it is expressed that money is playing the crucial role during this moment and it’s not like the time of ancient where each was helping eachother to care their children, hence, the TV is being one of the best solutions for making the children busy and parent work for feeding the children and run the life. In the essay the writer expresses that poor mothers can get only few days as off day in a week and on that day they have lots of work to do and if the children engage themselves watching television, she can accomplish her work very easily. The lower class (poor) mothers see the importance of the television. Similarly they accept that nude and violent and abusive programs only makes the children not the good programs. Many TV programs like Nick Jr , Sesame Street can develop the cognitive power of the children too.

**Critical Thinking:** The way, the writer has presented the essay attaching her real life that how the TV can be the best parents for the poor parents is most appreciable. Along with her clarification, I do not think that TV can really do the job of the mother. Mother has the greatest meaning as a living being which the non-living thing TV can’t do. So, can the TV occupy the position of mother? Does the TV cares the children as mothers do? Can the children learn to write looking television programs? Does caring the children only mean passing their time own-self? Why the writer is not expressing her view about the care of the children during their sickness?

**Assimilation:** After reading this essay of Gore, I come to realize that being mother and feeding their children is very much difficult task and how the mothers are managing their time with the help of different thing like TV. This essay made me to remember my past days when there was not TV set in my home but my family was joint family and I could be cared

by other family members too. At this moment I have a little daughter and for the sake of managing time I m compelled to make my children watch the television so I can manage the time for reading, cooking, feeding etc. this essay really touched me.

### **TV can be a parent**

Ariel Gore, USA (1970- )

#### ***I. Literal Comprehension***

Context: This essay is written by Ariel Gore (1970- ), USA, a poor single mother with a daughter. She has expressed her ideas in favour of TV in this essay. This is actually her resentment expressed in the form of an essay.

The big companies have shifted the job market to the developing countries. The employees are underpaid, and the working single mothers do not get child-care assistance. But the cost of living is very high. On this context, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has suggested the parents that they should not allow their children below 2 to watch television.

According to the AAP guidelines, TV is not helpful for the early brain development of the children because it deprives them of the chance for the direct interactions with parents and other significant caregivers. Therefore, exposing young children to television programmes should be discouraged.

As a single mother, the writer doesn't agree with the pediatricians. She believes that TV can be a helpful electronic baby-sitter or a co-parent. The writer's mother and her friends stayed at home and provided communal care to their children because they were poor and could not afford TV. But she cannot do so. She also doesn't agree with the idea that TV watching kids cannot interact with their parents or caregivers. She thinks that instead of attacking shows that try to help children, the pediatricians should warn parents that they not watch programmes made for adults when the children are in the room. Like the writer, some entertainment companies that produce programmes and cartoons for the children have criticized the AAP guidelines saying it's an effort to picking on them while others have welcomed them as an encouragement for the parents to spend more time bonding and playing with the children.

The writer thinks that better educational programmes for the children should be broadcast on TV and the culture of war and the media's glorification of violence should be ended. The American government should provide salaries for stay-at-home moms and living-wage jobs for the career women.

#### ***II. Interpretation***

The main point of this essay is that TV should be used for the benefit of the children. The child-friendly and educational programmes should be promoted while decreasing the number and trend of glorifying violence and war on TV. Parents should spend more time with their

children and they shouldn't be allowed to hang on with TV day and night. If used rationally, TV can be a good part of parenting.

### ***III. Critical Thinking***

I agree with the writer that TV can never be so much harmful for the children if used properly by the parents. I also agree with her that there is a dire need of stopping the glorification of violence and war on TV screens, but is it going to happen anyway? Day by day, I see, the number of such programmes is increasing. The modern parents are busy and TV has become a means for escaping of their parental responsibility of spending time with their children. I don't think parents are ever going to think in the way as the writer has.

### ***IV. Assimilation***

Now I know why TVs are not going to be thrown out of our houses at least in the near future. Parents, willingly or unwillingly, are enforced to depend on TV sets for baby-sitting. But I'm sure most of them are unaware of the bad effects of letting their children watch TV programmes that basically glorify sex and violence.

## **Unit 6 Crosscultural Bridges**

### **Marriage is a Private Affair**

**Chinua Achebe, Nigeria (1930 – 2013)**



**Literal Comprehension:** This suggestive story “Marriage is a Private Affair” is written by famous Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe. In this story, he has described about one marriage relation show marriage as a private affair. The subject matter of this story is love and marriage between Nnaemeka and Nene where Nnaemeka is from Ibo tribe and Nene is from other tribe. He did engagement and started to live with at Lagos city. When they were engaged Nene was asking to send the message about their engagement to his father Okeke but Nnaemeka did not do that because he was familiar with his father's nature and his culture. According to his culture, the son of Ibo tribe has to marry the girl of their own tribe arranged by father. If the arrangement is done by the father it will be acceptable from all the members of that community. If the arrangement is done by sons themselves with the girl of different tribe, it would make father very angry and creates the tension in family. So, he planned to tell

his father when he went home on leave. But he did not tell to Nene that his father had already chosen a girl Ugoye of his own tribe.

Nnaemeka went home on leave and told his father that he could not marry Ugoye because he was engaged to marry with Nene who is a good Christian and teacher in Lagos City whom he loves. After hearing this Okeke became very angry because according him and his rituals Christian woman should not speak/teach. Then Okeke asked her name and when he knew that she was the girl of other tribe but not of Ibo tribe, he became silent which silent was more dangerous than his angry speech. Okeke tried to persuade his son Nnaemeka not to marry with Nene. But when Okeke was sure that his son would not obey him, he did not speak with his son after ordering to go away from home and gave up as a last. When Nnaemeka went to Lagos, the neighbors came to Okeke to give sympathy about his son's behavior. Different old people and gentlemen encouraged Okeke to go against his behavior and suggested to check his son with witch doctor by saying his mind is not right. But Okeke denied that idea.

After six months Nnaemeka showed his father's letter to Nene. Nnaemeka had sent their wedding picture to his father. His father had returned to them by damaging the picture of Nene. Nene sobbed when she found her picture damaged. He consoled her by saying that his father is a good natured man and that one day all would be right. Nene and Nnaemeka were living happier and more comfortable life in Lagos. Everybody except Nnaemeka's father Okeke in Ibo tribe knew about that because Okeke never liked to talk about his son and never let other to talk about his son. With a great effort, he was able to forget his son because almost 8 years went by not having any contact between Okeke and his son Nnaemeka. Nene had given birth to two sons within that time. Nene wrote a serious letter to Okeke telling that his two grandsons were enthusiastic / inspiring to see their grandfather. She had requested him in letter to allow them to see him and also told that she would not come to village where Nnaemeka would come with grandsons. When Okeke read the letter of Nene, the idea of grandson melted him and he soon realized his mistake not giving invite to his son and daughter-in law for eight years in to their home. He regretted for his behavior. The sky was clouded and started to rain. He could not sleep that night. He saw vision that two grandsons were waiting outside in the rain asking to come in. tears came in his eyes. Mentally Okeke wanted to invite Nene's family. So he had vague fear that he might die before giving them their proper right.

**Interpretation:** This story "Marriage is a Private Affair" might be trying to tell us that married life becomes happier and joyful if it is done privately and in accordance with personal choice. Along with it, the writer wants to say that if the society is superstitious and narrow minded, it brings us tension and problems. It is not necessary to get married within own culture like Ibo in this story to live happy married life. As Okeke did not accept his son's private marriage with Nene, he got 8 years tension, misunderstanding, conflicts and sadness which are the result of narrow mindedness and superstitious belief/traditional belief. Here the writer wants to suggest that we should be careful, qualified and independent then personal choice of marriage can be the best example of marriage to live happily.

**Critical Thinking:** Though the writer's focus is to show private affair of marriage as the best example of marriage to live with joy and happiness, he has not described anything about the arrange marriage which has its own value too. So, some of the points which are described in this story makes me disagree. Here the private marriage life of Nene and Nnaemeka is shown as one of the happier and joyful life. Why did Nene write letter to Okeke, father-in-law, saying that their two sons want to meet him? Can't we say that they were not happy?

Can a private marriage always create happiness? Presently, we can see that private affair of marriage is bringing lots of problem in the world rather than arranged marriage. More events of divorce are occurring in private marriage cases. In such condition, how can we regard private marriage as the best example? When Okeke could not convince his son Nnaemeka not to marry with Nene, he completely rejected his son. How can a father reject a son due to his misunderstanding of marriage?

**Assimilation:** After reading this story, I came to know that superstitious and back-warded societies are not only in Nepal, these people are everywhere else. This story made me to remember the incident when I wanted to have inter-cast marriage with my present wife. She belongs to Newar family and me from Brahman family. We were in private affair at that time but our both family came to know our relation. As they were superstitious, both families denied our relation saying that we have different culture but we didn't give up and decided that convincing both family, we would get marry and enjoy the happy life. Finally, we both became independent and decided to get marry which was also accepted by both families. Now, everybody is happy seeing us that we are enjoying our private marriage life.

### **Then And Now: Finding My Voice**

**Elaine H. Kim, Korea (1961)**



**Literal Comprehension:** Elaine H. Kim a Korean writer used to believe in fortune-telling. Once as a fortune-teller said that during her teenage, her life's visions and ideas were developed, she thought it was not right because it was the most difficult and irritation period in her life. This was also the period of Korean War. Many Korean refugees took shelter in her home in America. It was the period of violence and discrimination in America. African Americans were discriminated and arrested. Asian Americans were also discriminated because they could not live in the hotel and public places. Kim was treated as foreigner though she was born in America. She worked hard to become popular. But after being selected as cheerleader she remained with the popular girls. She got inter-cultural influence for her eyes and hairs etc. She studied the history of racism, discrimination between the Whites and Blacks and the Korean War. Therefore, she decided to fight against racism and discrimination. She wrote many articles and edited many books written on the behalf of women and their voice.

**Interpretation:** As a cross-cultural article of studying different types of people and their culture, this essay also has emphasized on cultural impacts and differences. To believe a fortuneteller for a young and immature is not so easy but when we become mature and face many ups and downs in life then we say that it was true. This essay tries to tell us about experience living as a foreigner. It also says that one must be aware of one's own culture. It is difficult to live as a marginalized group. The writer during her teenage wanted to change her

identity. She wished that she had been a white American. She did not like her eyes and hair. But now she loves her culture and identity. This essay shows the problem of culturally different people, she likes to raise voice against discrimination among people on the basis of religion, status, caste, sex etc.

**Critical Thinking:** This world is a complex of many different cultures, religions, castes and tribes of people. There are discrimination, problems, war, chaos, injustices, struggle between people of different caste, religions, sex, ethnicity etc. This essay has presented on of such condition of the minorities Asians in the U.S.A. This essay has raised some question like – Why are the blacks discriminated in the USA? Why do the white Americans behave rudely? Moreover, we can ask that is it possible to adopt other's culture? Is it wise to hate and dominate people from other cultures? So in this essay Kim has analyzed how gender, race and economic class make an impact on personal life.

**Assimilation:** This essay memorized me a lot of superstitious people and fortune tellers in Nepal. In Nepal fortunetelling has become a way of earning money from illiterate and general people. They still believe on such superstitions and spend money on them. Not only in our society there are many such societies that believe on such practices. There are many problems and issues in society everywhere. There are discrimination even in the U.S.A. among different races, sexes, tribes, color, and status of people. This essay also encouraged me to stand for equality among different races. As Kim has tried to raise voice against such problems and discrimination. I also got inspired for raising voice against these.

## Arranging a Marriage In India

Serena Nanda



**Literal Comprehension:** In this essay, Serena Nanda discusses the marriage process practiced in India. In India arranged marriages are practiced than other types of marriages. Family members, especially parents are much concerned with the individuals being married. Parents choose a partner of their son or daughter. They have to go through a long process in finding the suitable marriage partner for their son and daughter. They consider the person's personality, color, character, education, social class, and many more things; they try to find out a suitable person from the same culture also. Personal choice is also a part of if arranging a marriage. The bride and groom can meet shortly before marriage. There is also match making process in India to find out match able person. The writer visits many times India and she has made many friends there. She did study as a project work there and tried to find a good match for her friend's son. She enjoyed attending a marriage ceremony and being a



matchmaker too. As she used to think marriage like in American and European countries, she found very difficult in India.

**Interpretation:** This essay is concerned about culture variation between American and Indian societies. In this essay the writer presents an account of the processes of the arranged marriage in India. An arranged marriage is not practiced in western American society. According to the Americans marriage becomes successful with love not with love not with other matters. This essay shows the culture and the importance of arranged marriage of India. In India, parents choose partner of their child. They are not free to choose their own marriage partner themselves. Although it is odd and strange for Americans, it is cultural and social norms and value of Indian people.

**Critical Thinking:** This essay is a detail of the process of finding a suitable girl for a boy to marriage. It is written by an American woman from the point of view of western eye about eastern culture. It is written about eastern society from the point of view of western people. Arranged marriage for westerns looks different from their point of view but it is very common in eastern societies. Marriage is a social practice so people may feel different about any social phenomena that come from different society. Any new matchmaker cannot do his her job, who is from different society. We depend on our relatives who know everything about families. In India parents are much involved in the marriage but they never allow their children to take a divorce. They are not free for love marriage like in western societies.

**Assimilation:** Cultural study of different societies is very interesting for me also. It gives great pleasure to the students or researchers. As I also like such marriage are arranged differently according to different castes, religions and cultures are arranged differently according to different castes, religions and cultural groups. I also knew this that most eastern or Indian and Nepali people like arranged marriage and western like love marriage. I also believe in arranged marriage because I have seen many failure love marriages and successful arrange marriages too. In the essay, the feeling of Sita is quite reasonable and convincing. In India and in Nepal, the parents look for the appropriate man or woman for their son and daughter. This is durable and practical also though it is difficult to find a match.

### **Life Is Sweet At Kumansenu**

**Abioseh Nicol, Sierra Leone (1924 – 1994)**



**Literal Comprehension:** This story is set in a small African village, Kumansenu. In a small mud house a widow Bola used to live with her seven years granddaughter Asi. Her son Megi was in government job as a clerk. Bola gave birth of six children but all of them were died. Musa, a village magician suggested bola to break bone of dead child in the grave so upcoming born child wouldn't mock her. There was belief that the dead child's spirit creeps from grave and scares mother sitting in her womb. When Bola was preparing food Asi was

skipping outside. Suddenly Bola saw her son inside the house and became so much excited. She wanted to give party in happiness of son's arrival. But Meji made promise to Bola not to tell about his arrival to anyone. His neck was tied with red handkerchief and Meji had hoarse voice. He said he was tired much so wanted to take rest. He slept whole day to next Saturday morning. Bola doubted in Meji's condition still he pretended to satisfy her. When Bola went to market Meji took his daughter for a long walk up to hill secretly. Asi asked many questions to father he cunningly answered them. At Bola's request all of them went to Meji's father grave and offered water and wine as culturally did. After the offer to graveyard they came back home secretly. Meji didn't eat any food rather threw outside. Bola asked Meji about bad smell of dead body in the room that Meji convinced her telling that it might be dead rat. At night there was heavy rain. In locked door Bola saw Meji out but not wet in the rain. Thanking his mother Bola a lot for giving birth and support, Meji departed telling "Life is sweet." Mr. Addai told Bola brought Lord gave birth him and he took back. Meji's wife brought news that Meji was killed on Friday noon and buried on Saturday at sundown. Bola couldn't believe her eyes. As Meji taught Asi how to open gold locket. Asi could unlock it. They all became surprised about his arrival there. Magician, Musa said Bola that she should have broken his bones 30 years ago so that he wouldn't have come and scared her. Despite of him Bola felt very happy getting chance of giving birth of such son and gave him chance to born again.

**Interpretation:** This story "Life is sweet at Kumansenu" might be trying to give the power of love in African culture. In that culture there was belief that the dead child would creep to come back to mother's womb to trouble the parents. As Meji died at the age of 30 and his spirit visited her. The spirit had come to thank for giving birth and a chance to live a short and sweet life. It might be trying to give the superstitious cultural tradition of African country. Bola loved her child so much that eventually she didn't feel sad rather a pride of giving birth of Meji like son.

**Critical Thinking:** Form the cultural and spiritual aspects the story is heart melting. It figures out about life-affirming character of African people. Beside cultural exercise there are many more disagreeable points. How can a person present as a spirit after death? Can't we identify the person who is already dead? Do present world people have such faith about spirit? If Meji's spirit was present how could he visit and take child up to hill? The spiritual aspect given in the story is unacceptable in this scientific age.

**Assimilation:** I have a lot from the people about their contact with ghosts, spirit etc. We have read such supernatural concept in many texts. This story reminded me my villagers who believe that after death spirit, comes to house and scares the people much like Nepali superstitious people the people of Africa believe on spirit, rebirth and such thing. The story "Life is Sweet at Kumansenu" can be interpreted about the power of love and the gratitude of children toward their parents. Explain. The story "Life is Sweet at Kumansenu" shows the power of love and love of children to their parents. Mother Bola loved her son, Meji very much who was ready to give party on Meji's arrival to the village. For the love and care of old mother Meji had also left his seven years lovely daughter, Asi with Bola. He had sacrificed his love to Asi and hopen to give children love to Bola. There is strong bond of love from son to mother and vice-versa. Meji, as a spirit had come not to scare Bola as their culture interpretation. He had come to thank her for giving short still sweet life for him. He was presented there not physically rather spiritually. if spiritual love is there, even the spirit can love and care of loved one. Form another angle we can easily say that this story has captured the gratitude of children to their parents. When Bola and Meji met they showed a

strong spiritual bond of love between them. Even though Bola lost her single son still she was proud of her such ideal son. After the married life and having seven years daughter Meji hadn't left any percent to love and respect for his ideal mother. He didn't like to trouble his mother saying he was dead rather thanked a lot for giving birth of his noble life. Thus, in conclusion we can say that this African-Culture base story is really about the power of love and the gratitude of children to their parents.

## Unit Eight

### The Human Condition

#### The Lunatic

**Laxmi Prasad Devkota, Nepal (1909 – 1959)**



**Literal Comprehension:** This poem “The Lunatic” by Laxmi Prasad Devkota is his own translation of Nepali Poem “Pagal”. The person or speaker of the poem is mad who tells about his uncommon activities just opposite from normal sane people. He sees the sound, hears the sight and tastes the smell. He can see Helen in a rose. He works with sixth sense. He speaks such language that world does not accept. There is one in subtracting one from one in his maths. There is heart that melts and makes world of vapor. His dream world is full of thorns not roses. People call him a mad while sitting in wintry sun, listening cuckoo’s song and weeping over people’s death. He calls prostitutes are dead bodies and ruler and leaders are real fools. The great king is beggar for him. Other’s heaven is his hell and others’ god is his worse. When he sees a number if injustices done upon powerless, innocent people by powerful, he is much violent and turns to be like volcano. He/ takes himself really mad because he can’t hear thousands of such injustices and inequalities exist in this society and the world ruled by fools.

**Interpretation:** “The Lunatic” is an autobiographical poem by a famous Literary star Nepali Literature late Laxmi Prasad Devkota. Looking to the then society full of injustices he has pivoted through ideas and feeling in this poem. The speaker has made a world of contrasts where oppositions are the desirable aspects by which the poet wants to have a systematic and humane world. He has used a mask of mad person but actually the so-called sane persons are mad and foolish. By using his characters like confidence, imagination, abnormality, aggression, rebellion he wants to break down all the vales of social injustices and dominations. In violent and challenging tone the poet wants to demolish all social, personal

and any types of dominations. The skillful presentation of sane and insane characters, activities and state the poet might be trying to challenge to so-called civilized, high class and rulers who enjoy in controlling others and looting the innocents. The poem is the best example of political protest poem.

**Critical Thinking:** It is natural for us not to accept any type of injustice, domination and inhuman behaviors. But the poet's senses of testing, smelling, hearing, sight and seeing the sound are really mad like. Again, The poet has used mask to criticize the ample of social personal injustices done in any name. How can a person visualize sound, hear the sight and taste the smell? Can one work with sixth sense? Though we can be disagree in some aspects of him, still we can't deny what is his intention in the poem. The poem's thirst is to be rebellious against any injustice is ever praiseworthy and ever convincing one. This depth idea is hidden under the surface abnormality of Lunatic in this poem.

**Assimilation:** After reading this persuasive poem I got the insight of why people become rebellious. What is the world and what is truth and how the innocent and honest people are made Scapegoat by so-called civilized and powerful people. The poem made me to remember the poem of famous poet Emily Dickenson "Much Madness is Divinest Sense" The speaker has been called insane and sent to prison because she doesn't accept what majority say. She is against injustice and domination so she doesn't say. She is against injustice and domination so she doesn't like to say white to black. If one doesn't do what group says then he/she is called insane. Similarly, the speaker of this poem "The Lunatic" is taking side of truth and so-called sane are mad and he is really sane. The poem also taught me that we should not accept any injustice by any cost.

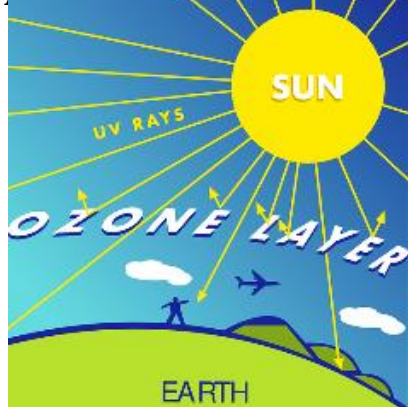
#### पागल

जरुर साथी म पागल !  
यस्तै छ मेरो हाल ।  
म शब्दलाई देख्दछु !  
दृश्यलाई सुन्दछु !  
वासनालाई संवाद लिन्छु ।  
आकाशभन्दा पातालका कुरालाई छुन्छु ।  
ती कुरा,  
जसको अस्तित्व लोक मान्दैन  
जसको आकार संसार जान्दैन !  
म देख्दछु, ढुङ्गालाई फूल !  
जब, जलकिनारका जल चिप्ला ती,  
कोमलाकार, पाषाण,  
चाँदनीमा,  
स्वर्गकी जादूगर्नी मतिर हाँस्दा,  
पत्रिएर, नर्मिएर, भल्किएर,  
बल्किएर, उठ्दछन् मूक पागलभैँ,  
फूलभैँ एक किसिमका चकोर फूल !  
म बोल्दछु तिनसँग, जस्तो बोल्दछन् ती मसँग  
एक भाषा, साथी !  
जो लेखिन्न, छापिन्न, बोलिन्न, बुझाइन्न, सुनाइन्न ।  
जुनेली गङ्गाकिनार छाल आउँछ तिनको भाषा  
साथी ! छाल छाल !

जरुर साथी म पागल !  
यस्तै छ मेरो हाल !  
तिमी चतुर छौ, वाचाल !  
तिम्रो शुद्ध गणित सूत्र हरहमेशा चलिरहेको छ  
मेरो गणितमा एकबाट एक भिके  
एकै बाँकी रहन्छ !  
तिमी पाँच इन्द्रियले काम गर्छौ,  
म छैटौँले !  
तिम्रो गिदी छ साथी !  
मेरो मुटु ।  
तिमी गुलाफलाई गुलाफ सिवाय देख्न सक्तैनौ,  
म उसमा हेलेन र पद्मिनी पाउँछु,  
तिमी बलिया गद्य छौ !  
म तरल पद्य छु !  
तिमी जम्दछौ जब म पगल्छु,  
तिमी संग्लन्छौ जब म धमिलो बन्छु,  
र ठीक त्यसैका उल्टो !  
तिम्रो संसार ठोस छ ।  
मेरो बाफ !  
तिम्रो बाक्लो, मेरो पातलो !  
तिमी दुङ्गालाई वस्तु ठान्दछौ,  
ठोस कठोरता तिम्रो यथार्थ छ ।  
म सपनालाई समात्न खोज्दछु,  
जस्तो तिम्रो, त्यो चिसो, मीठो अक्षर काटेको  
पान्ढीकीको बाटुलो सत्यलाई !  
मेरो छ वेग काँडाको साथी !  
तिम्रो सुनको र हीराको !  
तिमी पहाडलाई लाटा भन्दछौ,  
म भन्छु वाचाल ।  
जरुर साथी ।  
मेरो एक नशा ढिलो छ ।  
यस्तै छ मेरो हाल !

## How Sane Are We

Anuradha Chaudhary, Bangladesh(1947)



**Literal Comprehension:** This essay by Bangladeshi writer, Anuradha Chaudhary, focuses on the consciousness of environment and need of its conservation. As we are responsible for destroying nature its conservation is also our responsibility. We should not destroy anything in nature, they are not only for us; they are the gifts handed over to give or hand over our many generations. But there is vast destruction of nature in the world but less effort for saving and conserving nature. We think ecology and politics are closely linked although many people do not see any link between them. As elections are held to select our representatives, the representatives, whom we trust best, become ministers. So we easily think that they make only good decisions always for all but our representatives or ministers are wrong; they do just opposite; they think only their benefit, chair, party and vote. Many people think that political leaders are trustworthy so, who trust them cannot believe that they are irresponsible towards nature.

Chlorofluorocarbons(CFC) are man-made chemicals. They cause 20% of the greenhouse effect. They cause to deplete the ozone layer which is like a shield around earth. This absorbs 99% of the sun's ultraviolet rays. If the rays reach the earth, they will affect ecosystem, decrease agricultural productivity, weaken human immune system, cause skin cancer and eye cataracts. In 1920 CFCs were first made to use in refrigerators, spray cans, computer chips, air-conditioners etc. In 1974, the world's scientists disclosed the fact that there is link between CFCs and the ozone layer, but nations and CFCs producers turned deaf ears towards the warning. Only in 1985, it was believed that there is a link between CFCs and the ozone layer. Then the world's nations signed a document to stop CFCs productivity by 2006.

The decision of phasing out CFCs globally is a rational decision but the writer does not think they are honest to the decision. They could stop the use of CFCs immediately and use cheaper and harmless chemicals to substitute CFCs. But their decisions lack implementation. By allowing people to use CFCs for some more times, we are causing destruction to ourselves. Here the writer relates the science fiction "War with the Newts" by Karel Capek. Where the newts are exceptionally clever water animals which could give men pearls. Men gave them knives to keep themselves safe from sharks. Their number increased so largely that they even went to the country to live and endangered the existence of human beings. Like the newts we are destroying our own dwelling and worsening our environment and air.

**Interpretation:** We human being is considered the supreme creature of all the other many creatures in the world; we think ourselves wise, witty, clever, intelligent, enthusiastic and responsible creature. But, we are so sane that we destroy our own home and ourselves not only other creatures. We think only inheritance of the natural things here and do whatever thing we like. The essay also implies that human cannot make rational decisions. Neither general people choose rational political leaders as their representatives nor do the elected representatives make right decisions in time. Moreover, they are not honest too. They are only worrying about the next election but not about the future of people and other creatures. They know that CFCs are depleting ozone layer but are not doing anything to stop the use of this harmful chemical. They make decisions but have no courage and take no initiation of implementation. Thus, we are spoiling environment by electing such leaders and they are spoiling the future of mankind.

**Critical thinking:** This essay is mainly focused on environmental degradation and importance of its conservation. In this essay the writer criticizes the governments, politicians and factory owners who use harmful chemicals like chlorofluorocarbons. She gives emphasis on its conservation because we are responsible for its destruction. She criticizes sharply to the leaders and the people who elect such leaders but she does not think the scientists should also be equally careful about the harmful effects of the chemical. Not only leaders and scientists all we are equally responsible for this problem and should be careful for its solution.

**Assimilation:** Reading literary texts is very beneficial. Literature gives not only pleasure or entertainment but a vast knowledge about different fields. As I read this essay, I got a lot of information from this essay. I knew about the ozone layer and its usefulness. I also knew the bad sides of air conditioners and refrigerators. Before this I was careless of these things; I would not feel anything while using AC and fridge, but now I feel I am guilty of polluted nature when I use these appliances. I have seen many people suffering from skin cancer, respiratory problems and other many diseases. This might have been caused by the ultra violet rays of the sun and the depleted ozone layer. Now I will try to convince all my relatives and families about these problems.

## Gaia

Shreedhar Lohani, Nepal (1944)



**Literal Comprehension:** “Gaia” is a beautiful poem composed by Shreedhar Lohani, a great poet of Nepalese literature. In this poem ‘Gaia’ means the earth. The poet shows that the earth or Gaia is in pain. But she is capable of taking care of herself and enduring everything. The poet says that the stormy wind blows among the withered palms, heavy and devouring



rain hits the earth. The seas become furious. The mountain peaks become crooked. Time plucks at the world on its gray thing. Wings smell of mildew covers the earth. Everywhere around the world there is hunger and turbulence. Even though, the earth tolerances. Gaia is tolerant and capable of taking care of herself.

**Interpretation:** The poet may be trying to compare Gaia with the earth. The earth is gentle: feminine nurturing but also cruel to those who exploit her. The poet also says that the earth is in pain but she has capacity to endure everything. He also tries to alert us that if we continue exploiting the earth, she may strike us back. Finally, the poet also hopefully says that the earth is capable to look after herself.

**Critical thinking:** Although, this poem is interesting and metaphorical. Some ideas of the poet are not convincing. How can non-living things feel pain or sadness? If Gaia is capable of taking care of herself, why should we care the earth?

**Assimilation:** The poem has affected me very much. The poet has appealed us to think about the earth seriously. After reading this poem I understood that Gaia is in real pain and if we exploit her, she may not endure and strike us back. This poem also instructed me to respect and love the mother nature or the earth.

### **The Making of A Scientist – Four Levels of Interactions** **V.S. Ramachandran, India (1951)**



**Literal Comprehension:** V.S. Ramchandra's essay of "The making of a Scientist" deals with his personal expression about science, how and why did he study science and its consequences. He also thins study and companionship with a nature is must because nature is the sole source of all things and science deals with those things. He also says thinks that contradictory ideas are necessary to make a child a successful person; his mind should be filled with many such ideas; only simple and straight ideas cannot make a person curious. Therefore, the writer was interested in many subjects like history, botany and so many other subjects. The modern technology and methodology and equipment also cannot give good results because they are not used properly in this scientific field it is possible to ask very simple questions and to get amazing answers. He thinks neurology very much interesting and challenging subject and selects to study human beings. He wants to enjoy his work and inspire other people. Ones who works in any field with a fun and interest or curiosity can be famous and success person.

**Interpretation:** This essay is slightly difficult to understand through simple reading. It is an expressive essay and here the writer has put his ideas and feelings or his story of success as a scientist. It is trying to tell us the importance of science and scientific research. It also focuses



on multi disciplinary study to be a successful scientist. It also highlights on the necessity of regular effort, curiosity and interest of many things to find out a new theory or to complete a new research. Any job we should do with the point of view of fun and fame as well as happiness that profit minded job.

**Critical Thinking:** This essay is a complex one with an expressive idea. I think for the students of Business Studies in bachelor level, it keeps so great value. It most suits for the students of science faculty because they can have good message to study science. Though any faculty needs multi-dimensional knowledge to be talent, wise and expert, this essay more suits for those students who are going to study science. They can be motivated towards science than these students of BBS. It creates some questions to me. How can it encourage and raise curiosity in them to be a scientist? Can the student of BBS be scientists or does it help them to be a successful business person?

**Assimilation:** This essay encourage me to be regular, curious of different things and labour hard to be success in life. It also taught some important things. We can be successful if we have too much interest and fun rather think as a burden in the things that we do. I also got how inspiration to be a scientist and to create a world of my own. It inspired me to be a multi-talent to have a complete idea about anything. Like the writer, I also like to study different subjects and keep interest on different fields but it is not possible to me become a scientist because I have only curiosity and interest but no opportunity, equipment and time to do a research. Therefore, all persons though have curiosity and interest cannot be scientist.

### **Scientific Inquiry: Invention and Test**

**Carl G. Hempel, Germany (1905 – 1997)**



**Literal Comprehension:** A Hungarian physician and a German writer Carl G. Hempel Semmelweis is the writer of this essay. When his friend had a problem that more women in the First Maternity Division of the Vienna General Hospital died from childbed fever than in the Second Maternity Division of the hospital. Though he took many new ideas and tested them to solve the problem but there was no control in death. First it was supposed that the childbed fever was caused by epidemic influences. When an epidemic, cholera widespread, it was not limited to the First Division without affecting the Second division, the city of Vienna and the mothers who were admitted to the First Division after delivering the babies on the way. The second idea was that overcrowding in the First Division was the cause of higher death rate. Patients avoided the First Division and the Second Division was more crowded because of the high death rate in the First Division.

As diet and the care of the patients in both divisions were the same, another idea was that in the First Division. It was rough examination of patients by medical students was injurious

enough to cause childbed fever. But Semmelweis showed that natural birth process was more injurious, that in the Second Division midwives examined the patients equally roughly, and that after reducing the number of medical students and their examination the death rate was not still reduced. After an accident, Semmelweis concluded that foul material from the dead body was responsible for childbed fever, and after washing hands with the chemicals before examining the patients decreased the death rate. Later Semmelweis also concluded that the dirty matter from the living beings caused childbed fever in the hospital. Therefore, proper hand washing was necessary there in the hospital.

**Interpretation:** As this essay is a scientific inquiry, it is based on finding a solution or the cause of death in a maternity hospital. It describes many experiments and examinations to find out the cause but at last, it is found that the dirty hands of the doctors and nurses were the main mediums for transmitting the diseases. As a scientific essay, it tells a success story to find a problem and its results or conclusion as proved. This essay shows that the process of scientific discovery involves formulating, hypotheses, testing predictions, and an interdisciplinary search. It may also be interpreted that sometimes accidentally a chance plays an important role in scientific invention. If Kolletschka's hand had not been injured by the medical student's knife, Semmelweis would not have found the solution to the problem. As the nature of science, this essay also conveys a message of the steps or process of scientific discovery; just hypothesis, imagination, blame or blind faith cannot give a solution to any problem as a scientific inquiry gives.

**Critical Thinking:** There are many problems and their solutions in the world. Only scientific inquiries have given practical and reliable or useful solution. But in scientific inquiry there should be followed some steps or procedures. This essay also has given a way of thinking to find out a solution to a problem. As Semmelweis examined various ideas and at last found out the main cause of the problem, we also should try our best as many times as we can to find out the solution of any problem. Through this we can raise some questions about this essay that is it possible to experiment human's body everywhere every time or not?

**Assimilation:** This essay has focused on the procedure of finding out the solution or the main cause of the death in a hospital; with continuous effort and examination of the doctors, it is found out that the dirty hands were the main causes. This gives all of us an important message of cleanliness and good hand washing before doing any work; otherwise we ourselves will be the cause of different diseases. This also has shown me a way how to think and find out the solution to a problem. To solve a problem trial and error method is necessary; I also got inspired to find out the solution with experiment but not with superficial study of my problems. It gave me a message of continuous practice and effort and scientific research of any problem are needed than blame, superstitious faith etc.

## King John and The Abbot of Canterbury

Anonymous, England (before 1695)



**Literal Comprehension:** Once the king of England was quite jealous and suspicious of the prosperity of the Abbot of Canterbury. So he thought that the abbot might make a conspiracy against his throne. The king decided to get rid of him. So he called the abbot and asked three nonsense questions on the condition that he would behead him if he failed to answer the questions within fifteen days. The questions were: What is the exact price/value of the king with his crown of gold on his head among the noblemen? How quickly he may ride the whole world about? What does the king think at the moment? It made him too sad. He tried his best to find the answer by consulting the professors visiting the university but couldn't. Finally, his own shepherd promised him to help him. So one day, in order to answer the questions raised by the king, the shepherd changed himself as the abbot and went to the palace. One by one he answered that the value of the king was twenty nine pence less than the savior, for the second he responded that it takes a whole day if he rose and ran in the speed of sun that rotates round the earth and for the last, he responded that the king might be thinking that he was the abbot of Canterbury but he was wrong because he was a simple shepherd to abbot.. Finally, the disguised shepherd i.e. the abbot exposed all the truths. The king pardoned them and withdrew all his charges.

**Interpretation:** From the moral point of view, the poem is much impressive. Through the poem, the poet proves that the bookish and formal education is not so much effective and useful to solve the practical problems. On the one hand, it has a great lesson that people and their knowledge shouldn't be judged on the ground of their profession and appearance. Thus the text has taught a great lesson that makes it clear that much is learnt through their daily life activities than from the universities. So the so called ignorant ones in terms of getting formal education aren't to be ignored and devaluated.

**Critical Thinking:** The poem seems to be much humorous and satirical. So far it imparts the idea of human knowledge and wisdom, it is appropriate but in whatever way the King Abbot and the Shepherd are presented, they don't seem believable and convincing. Since the king fails to recognize the shepherd changed as abbot. Similarly, the shepherd is presented in such a way that doesn't fit him to be more than that it mocks the formal education. It is too difficult to accept it.

**Assimilation:** Reading this poem, I am too much impressed with the fact that only the formal education doesn't make people capable, rather they may learn many things from the practical experiences too. Having seen in my village, I come to know that many old people are capable

of doing various things which other educated men don't know. So people can learn many things from their practical knowledge and experience.

### Third Thoughts

**E.V. Lucas, England (1868 – 1938)**



**Literal Comprehension:** Once the writer's friend while visiting New York bought a painting thinking that it was by Turner. He got it at cheap price since the seller was also confused about its originality. With the painting he went to London and sold it at fifty pounds. He was so much happy that he decided to share the profit with seller of New York. At first, he decided to share fifty percent of his profit and wrote a letter but having no stamp, he went to his room. Again at about 3 AM, he thought it quite inappropriate to share the profit but still thought of sending ten pounds only. His thinking kept on changing and couldn't sleep well. Again, he thought of sending five pounds thinking that if he shared, the Goddess would be angry and he thought it was he who knew the value of the painting. If he had known it, he wouldn't have given him at such cheap rate, so it is wrong to send him the profit. Finally, he decided to send only a pound. Early in the morning, he went out side and spent all his money in gambling. Finally, he concluded that buying and selling are straight forward matter. Everyone in this matter tries to get benefit. The buyer once paying to the goods has no obligation to the dealer.

**Interpretation:** The story presenting the constant changing nature of human mind seems to be full of humor and satire. Basically thinking with the nature of businessman's mind it proves that human mind can never be rigid and fixed. Especially in business their mind keeps on changing. At another level, it sheds light on human earning since the earning as that of writer's friend has no meaning at all in life. The most important thing in the story is that in business buying and selling are straight forward dealings. It has nothing to do with human consideration, sympathy and faith. Once goods are sold or bought they have nothing to do with them since then.

**Critical Thinking:** The story offers a great deal of humor and satire. But in many respects, it doesn't seem appropriate and convincing. The first is: Does anyone want to share his profit? It is so much unbelievable. Similarly, the seller of any good knows its quality and the cost. Does any seller sell his good without knowing it?

**Assimilation:** As I went through the story, it reminded me of my own events that I experienced earlier. Once I had been to my village after a long time from the city. I had taken

a beautiful watch there. Everyone liked it, one of my friends promised to pay Rs 500 for it ,so I gave it to him. I got Rs 300 as profit, and so I got extremely happy.

## **The Clock Tower – Four Levels of Interactions**

**Bhupi Sherchan (1936 – 1989)**

**(Translated by Padma Devkota)**



**Literal Comprehension:** The speaker in this poem describes the conduction of an old pensioner. The poem has compared the old pensioned senior vet with clock tower, Ghantaghar. He is old, rejected and has distributed all his things to his relatives. All his military equipments are gone. The old pensioner has jealously too; so, he has kept two souvenirs of his army life. They are an old-modeled, large, round pocket watch and the ancient hat. The clock tower is like a pensioned senior vet who is passing t=long and sand days of the old age. It has a clock on its neck and a cap like the old vet on its head. It is standing forever on the bank of Ghantaghar and it is brooding.

**Interpretation:** The loneliness of the old man is powerfully presented through the image of the clock tower symbolically. Like the clock tower which is old, neglected and waiting its end day, the old man has also the same fate- old, rejected and dejected. The poem has revealed the bitter reality of the old age. Ranipokhari was built by the king Pratap Malla in 1727 BS in the memory of his son. It was a token of consolation to his wife. Thus, by looking at the lake the old man remembers his past and is mollifying (lessening) his suffering.

**Critical Thinking:** Time is most power full thing. It turns a handsome man to an old and ugly person who has nothing except memories. We all are victims of the time. The poem aptly points out the power of time. The vet is sitting under the tower, time, which itself is the curse of for human being. The poem has used the power of imagery in a powerful way. Without stating the history of Ranipokhari it invites readers to know why the old man is looking at the Ranipokhari, queen's lake.

**Assimilation:** In our life as well, when we grow older, nobody talks to us. We want to share our experiences, but nobody would have time to listen us. Thus we lament and curse time because it is time that changes us to an old and ugly things. We have to wait silently to death. We cannot stop the passage of time, time is powerful than us. We have nothing except lamenting on the bygone days. I met an old man in Pasupati area. He reported all his grief within five minutes to an unknown like me.

## घण्टाघर

कुनै फाटेर  
कुनै मुसाले काटेर  
कुनै छोरा नाति  
एक एक गरी  
फौजका सब पुराना जर्सी सिद्धिए ।

तर जतनसाथ बचाइराखेको  
फौजी जीवनका दुइटा प्रिय चिन्ह  
एउटा पुरानो डिजाइनको ठुलो गोलो जेबघडी  
छातीमा भुन्ड्याएर,  
अनि एउटा पुरानो टोप शिरमा लाएर  
माछा मार्ने निहँले  
बुढेसकालमा लामा  
र दिक्दारे दिन बिताउने

एउटा पेन्सिनवाला बूढो लाहुरेभैँ  
रानी पोखरीमा बल्छी हालेर  
तटमा उभिएर निरन्तर

भोक्रिरहेछ घण्टाघर ।

## **The Stub-Book**

**Pedro Antonio de Alarcon, Spain(1833 – 1891)**



**Literal Comprehension:** This is a Spanish story written by Pedro Antonio de Alarcon. This story deals with a laborious farmer's love to his products; fruits and vegetables. The main character or farmer of the story Uncle Buscabeatas plans to take his forty of best pumpkins to market in the morning that cuts them from their stalks the night before. But he finds in the morning that they all stolen. He goes to the market in Cadiz and is able to identify his own products. He shows the stalks as the proofs as he had put safely them cut from the top of each pumpkin plant. He showed those stems fitted exactly on the top of each of them. Just as the authenticity of a receipt from the tax collector's book from which it was torn he proved that those pumpkins were him. So the main character Uncle Buscabeatas has ingeniously compared "sub-book" with his own authentic product. With the help of the police he arrests the thief; he got back the money from the thief.



**Interpretation:** Though the subject matter of the story is simple, its theme and presentation is very important. Simply this seems a story of a pumpkin farmer and a thief but the moral it gives is very useful and memorable. It depicts the value of one's own creation or products. How dear and valuable in one's output of hard labour and no can grab it from his hand is the theme of the story. This story tries to tell us that the true gain of hard work is sweet and stealing and cheating is punishable at any cost. For example, Uncle Buscabeatas, who had produced good pumpkins in his garden, they were very much dear for him. Uncle Fulano stole pumpkins from his neighbour's garden and he was punished. It also teaches us to enjoy own labour, work, and product and that we will get return but who tries to cheat and stealing without labour will be punished. The title of the story and theme of the story meet when the farmer shows the stalks as the green book of tax-collector. For a farmer such stalks can be like the green books of tax-collectors.

**Critical Thinking:** This story falls under critical thinking but it has simple plot and theme. The author chooses an interesting subject and characters. The farmer Buscabeatas represents successful person in his vegetable production. He loves his pumpkins and tomatoes as his own children and gives them name also. Like him, everyone can enjoy the gracefulness and good returning from their hard work. One loves and feels pride in one's own work. The writer cleverly presents the story. He compares the stalks of pumpkin with the stub books. Normally the stalks are nothing just wastage but when time comes they are very powerful proofs. It is very interesting fact that they work as stub books. The tactful presentation the writer in solving problems like uncle Buscabeatas is admirable. This story makes aware that even very simple and useless things also can have great value in time. Otherwise, labour is very important and no one can snatch it.

**Assimilation:** For a creator, everything that he/she creates is equally dear and valuable either a pumpkin for a farmer or a child for a father or mother. For a writer his/her books are dear and a poet loves his poems so on. At all they are their creation or products. One's product is the result or output of his/her hard labour. The output of labour is sweet and cheating is punishable. After reading this story I came to know that a pumpkin or a child; both are equally dear for its creator or producer. Like Buscabeatas, I also love my creations. Now I have understood the value of labour like Uncle Buscabeatas. Only a laborious person can get success and no cheater can grasp his labour.



## **Mr. Know-All**

**W. Somerset Maugham, England (1874 – 1965)**



**Literal Comprehension:** When the First World War ended, the writer ‘Somerset Maugham ‘ decided to go to Japan from America by ship. It was very difficult to get a good seat in the ship. But he managed to get in cabin seat in the ship. His cabin partner , max Kelada , was much talkative. At first the writer thought that he was a Negro but later he came to know that he was also an English man. However, he hated his chatty nature. He introduced with everyone in the ship and conducted a lottery action. He said that he had good knowledge of everything. So they called him ‘mr. know all’. Although alcohol was strictly prohibited to carry, he uttered writer to have cocktail “mix wine”. Once the writer, Mr. kelada, Mr and Mrs Ramsays got chanced to have dinner in the same table. Mr. ramsays was in the consular service posted at Kobe, Japan. He had spent one year in alone in japan because his salary was very low. Now he had come to take his wife with him. Mr. kelada said that he was going to japan to examine pearls. He saw a pearls chain around mrs ramsays neck and said that they were original. When Mr. Ramsays told him to guess the price, he said that they could cost upto 30,000 dollars.but when Mr. Ramsay said that they were false, he didn’t believe and they had bet of one hundred dollars. When Mr. Kelada was going to check the pearls, Mrs ramsay looked nervous. Although the pearls were original , Mr. kelada said that they were false to save Mrs. Ramsays. The next day when she returned his money, the writer was surprised to know the reality. He also know that Mr. kelada was really mr. know all. Then he began to like Mr. kelada.

**Interpretation:** The writer may be trying to show humanity and nature of women. Outer cover can never represents the inner reality. Although Mr. kelada is hated by all, he is proved to be the best example of humanity. He became fool and lost money and prestige but he saved the happy married life of Mr and Mrs Ramsay. This story also shows the duel character of women.

**Critical thinking:** Although this story gives the moral lession. Some ideas of the writer are not convincing. After reading this story we can ask some questions. If alcohol was not allowed to carry how did Mr. kelada offet cocktail to the writer? Did Mr. kelada know everything? Then why did people hate him?

**Assimilation:** I am very much affected by this story. After reading this story, I know that we can’t judge people from their appearance. This story also taught me that it is not easy to understand the character and secrecy of women. Now I won’t believe in women easily.

## Keeping Errors At Bay

**Bertrand Russell, England (1872 – 1970)**



**Literal Comprehension:** This essay by Bertrand Russell providing multiple examples of mistake that people generally commit in their day to day life. His main idea is to provide suggestions to avoid the mistakes. We need careful, serious, critical and analytical mind to get rid of these errors. This essay deals with the ideas of avoiding errors that happen in our daily life situations. We can remove many foolish opinions by observing the related facts. When observations are impossible, we have to compare our ideas with those of the others. If there are evidence and knowledge, there will be no wrong understanding. Visiting different places and observing societies of the world also helps us to purify your own opinions. Knowing others idea makes us less dogmatic. If we have one-sided idea about anything, we will not find out the truth, such situation, we will make our good points more important. Fear and prejudice of different types create obstacles from learning the truth or reality. So we should be very careful while doing any work. We should not take as granted anything without proper observation.

**Interpretation:** To error is human but to do mistake is not excusable. Human make errors knowingly or having known about that error is not human. This is somewhat punishable also. We cannot find truth without proper understanding. The essay tries to tell us why human beings are unable to see the truth. They do not see the matter. They have illusion that they know everything without knowing it properly. It says that we have some mistakes generally we do not compare our idea with that of others. We unnecessarily feel pride and ignore things. Therefore, we commit crimes or errors. This is human but to do mistake knowingly cannot be human. There are solutions for errors but not the knowingly committing mistakes.

**Critical Thinking:** Russell gives very concrete idea about errors and their solutions. He says how and why we do errors and how can we correct them. After reading this story I came to know and have some questions. The essayist has presented a scientific way of thinking. By comparing and contrasting, we can judge our own ideas. I agree with many things which the essayist says but there are some questions in my mind. Who can remain without doing any error? How can one know that it is error and this not? Can we change our mind not to doing errors? Why people cannot find out the fact easily? How we can compare such things to those of the others? What are the forms of the truth? How to know that whose idea is right or wrong? Because of these reasons generally people commit errors in life.

**Assimilation:** Generally, we think right whatever we do. This essay gave me lots of ideas about errors and their types as well as their remedies (solution). I started to realize my mistakes in my life as I sometimes used to stubborn and think everything right. I started to honour other's ideas. I also came to know why people mistake while making ideas. A wise man should look at the things from different sides. We should be comparative and multidimensional perspectives should be used. I came to know that we can do errors in every work every time but that is only found out after its proper judgment.

### **What is Intelligence, Anyway?**

**Isaac Asimov, USA (1920-1992)**



**Literal Comprehension:** In this essay by Isaac Asimov, an American science-fiction writer, he consists that those who score higher marks in intelligent test are considered to be intelligent people. The writer also used to always score high marks and therefore he thought himself to be intelligent, but his intelligence did not help him anymore. He had to be an assistant of the cook in the mess of army. He had to go to the car-mechanic to make his car repaired although the mechanic may score low marks in the intelligent test. If the questions were made by non –academicians, the writer would be an unsuccessful. He really became fool when the mechanic asked him a puzzle question. Therefore, any person who scores high marks in any test may not be expert in every field. It is very limited knowledge in this vast world. So, we should not think ourselves very proud of scoring high score in any test; there are so many fields to score high score in life, then only we can be expert in many fields.

**Interpretation:** Knowledge has no limit. Only academic score is not enough to be an all round expert. It is impossible to have knowledge of every field equally. This essay tries to analyze the intelligence. Intelligence is an ability to solve the intelligent problem easily. Although the writer used to score very high marks in the intelligent test, he was fit for only assistant cook. The car-repair mechanic was intelligent enough to make the car although he could not score high marks in the intelligent test. One-sided knowledge is not complete. We should be multi-dimensional to score high always everywhere but it is impossible for a single person to be all round. One can be intelligent in only one field. If the car-repair man makes questions of the test, the highly intelligent writer can fail because it is not his field. Therefore, in different fields, different people with different types of knowledge are useful. Only a single knowledge is not sufficient everywhere.

**Critical Thinking:** After reading this essay, I came to remember one thing very fresh in my mind. In our society we think that a person who got high score in academic exams and positioned high is always assumed fit for other all positions. A literate doctor, an academic engineer with high score can never be good politician or ruler or administrator. It is foolish to think a doctor expert and success in administration and good governance. It needs good knowledge in administration and governing than academic scores. I have some questions. It is not rational to think an intelligent person in school or college is always intelligent in every field? Can a doctor run government smoothly and wisely? Can a warrior be success in administration? Likewise can the leaders only be success in formulating/drafting a good constitution? Can a hero in film be always everywhere be hero in politics and real life? Even very limited knowledge can make people wise. Everybody can be intelligent in different field. Is it right to think that learned people are intelligent? Why shouldn't we realize that any person should be fit from any angles? Is only mental capacity enough for good practical life? It is not true that one person expert in one test or field cannot be expert in other field; to think so is just silliness.

**Assimilation:** Different persons have different capacity or level or field of knowledge. A single person never can fit for every field. It focuses on individual talent in individual field. This essay memorized me that one person who is talent in school or campus may score fewer score in other field. It is needless to be sad when a friend gets more marks in an exam; surely I will get more marks than his in other exam or other field. In school I never stood first in mathematics but the friends who scored more marks in mathematics never scored such score in English. It has taught me to value even an ordinary man to be able doing anything. Everyone is capable in his or her place. There should not be feeling of any discrimination of intellectual and non-intellectual person. Everybody is a capable person in his field. Now I am a little back in earning money but I have good idea in my field than those rich people and I am able to use their money but they are just thinking how to collect money.

### **To His Coy Mistress**

**Andrew Marvell, England (1621 – 1678)**



**Literal Comprehension:** “To His Coy Mistress” is a beautiful love poem composed by Andrew Marvell, an English poet, tries to woo his coy mistress to participate in the lust game in the prime of youth and beauty. The poet has a shy beloved and she doesn't become ready to fulfill the poet's desire. So, the poet says that if they had enough time, he would spend hundreds of years to admire her youth and beauty. He would admire her eyes and forehead

for one hundred years. He would gaze and praise her each breasts for two hundred years each. He would spend 30,000 years to see and admire the rest parts of her body and finally, he would touch her heart. He says that she is so much praise-worthy.

But the poet finds the winged chagrins not always hurrying near. Her youth and beauty doesn't always remain the same. One day she will reach her beauty marble grave. There she'll not hear the poet's love song. Worms will try to destroy her long preserved virginity. No one will embraces her shyness and participate to enjoy like two birds of love. He also suggests her to swallow all the sweetness of youth being both of them a ball. He also tells her the bitter reality that the sun also sets after rising.

**Interpretation:** The poet may be trying to show the importance of romantic love at the prime of youth and beauty. He says that life is brief and death is inevitable. Do, he suggests us to fulfill our desire and enjoy life fully when we are young. He says that if we miss the enjoyment of youth, our life will be absurd after death. That is why, he also tells her beloved to enjoy life fully to surpass time and death.

**Critical thinking:** This poem is beautiful, romantic and appealing. The poet persuades his beloved to involve into romantic and productive love game. However, some ideas of the poet are questionable. Should we be so lusty? Why doesn't the beloved refuse the sex appeal? Is love limited only in youth? So, I am fully convinced.

**Assimilation:** This poem impressed me a lot. After reading this poem, I came to realize that time is limited and we are headings towards the grave. Also I understood that I have also determined to enjoy much in the prime of youth.

## **The Telegram on The Table**

**Parshu Pradhan, Nepal (1943)**

**Translated by Michael Hutt**



**Literal Comprehension:** In this story Pranshu Pradhan has presented the bitter reality of Nepalese youths who come to he town from their villages and the never like to go back to their village. They dream to go to the foreign country where they think that there is heavenly pleasure and hey could earn enough money. In reality there is full of struggle.

Krishna a boy come to Kathmandu from his remote village and learned English language. Then he started to work as a tourist guide to describe the historical places to the tourists. In the beginning he used to go to his village at the time of Dashain. But now, he completely forgot his village, Parents and even his wife. He demanded to go to the foreign country as a foreign girl would marry with him and she would take him to her country. He thought that his wife was the obstacle for his next marriage. He hoped for the death of his wife because it would be the freedom for his plan. Unfortunately his wife died and he got a telegram about the news of his wife's death. He becomes happy and thought it was his wish fulfillment. Those, a friend come to express his condolence and he just said "Thank You" for but he couldn't because of the poor condition of his room. One evening he suddenly remembered his past and the poor background. He also felt that an Image of women came into his mind. The image was of his wife dead. He realized his mistake that he become happy at the death of wife. He read the telegram again and he tore it into pieces he started to weep.

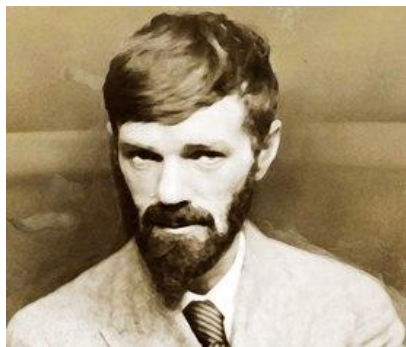
**Interpretation:** This presents the bitter reality of Nepalese youths who come to town from their villages and they never like to go back. They dream for the foreign country and though there is heavenly pleasure there. But in reality there is also struggle. Krishna, the young boy also dreams to get married with a foreigners and to go to the her country. But at last he realized his reality and his dream was not fulfillment. It also shows that we should learn to live with reality about not in dream.

**Critical Thinking:** Many people think that their life, would be happy if they get go to in the foreign country. But Pradhan has exaggerated. Some issues here in his chapter. How could a person forget his wife completely? How could he be happy at the death of this wife? There is no any evidence about that bad relationship between Krishna and his wife. Man can dream for better future but he can't forget the present completely.

**Assimilation:** This story taught me the lesson that way the town is over crowded people like to come to the town but they never like go to back to their villages. It also taught me the lesson that dream may not be true for all the time. We should learn to live reality. We all have ambition but over ambition are bad. We should not forget our past, background and reality which are with us.

## Piano

**David Herbert Lawrence, England (1885 – 1930)**



**Literal Comprehension:** It was evening. A woman was playing on the piano and singing to the speaker. Her song made him think of his childhood days. When he was a little boy and would sit under the piano. The piano would make a loud unpleasant sound. He would press

his mother's feet. But she would continue playing on the piano without being disturbed and smile at her son. The speaker tried to control himself and remain with the singer in the present time. But the lady's song was so skilful that it took him again his boyhood days. When the family would sing religious song in their warm sitting room on Sunday evening, the piano played by his mother would guide him and other family members. Now the speaker did not like the song of the woman at all, because it had completed its task by taking him to his passed days with his mother. Therefore it sounded to him like a loud noise. He wanted to forget his present manhood and wish to become a child. After this he wept openly like a child.

**Interpretation:** This poem may be trying to telling us that music take us back to our happy past. It may also be interpreted to mean that motherly love is superior to sensual love. The attraction of childhood makes us forget our manhood. More over "piano" is the poem about the power of memory.

**Critical Thinking:** I don't agree with the speaker because being a man he wifes openly in the presents of a woman. His pride of being man does not allow him to do so. The poet has rightly observed that one can not be satisfy with the presents if he is reminded of happy past days.

**Assimilation:** This poem has help me to understand myself batter. A nostalgic feeling is equally found in human being. I have also desire to belong to my past. Sometime I think if I were a child' I would not have to be worried about my present difficult time.

### **The Great Answer**

**Fulton Oursler, USA (1893 – 1952)**



**Literal Comprehension:** In a French village near the Spanish border, a lot of refugees had gathered. They all wanted to cross the border and sail safely to the USA. If they were cut by the Gestapo, the secret German police, they would be either imprisoned or murdered. Among the refugees were a young mother and her 4 years old daughter. They all met at the foot of the mountain. A guide was leading them all. On the way the weakest old man said that he was tired and unable to climb further, but he asked them to leave him there to die. However the guide insists that the old man should keep on climbing with the child on his shoulder until he died. After this two more old man said the same thing, and they also had to carry the child.



After they all had crossed the border safely the three old men felt stronger, freer and livelier than others.

**Interpretation:** This story might be trying to tell us that life is full of struggle and that those who worked harder even at the critical moment are sure to get success. It may also be interpreted to mean that success welcomes those who are never tired of hard labor.

**Critical Thinking:** This short story has beautifully presented the great answer for the riddle of life. Norman people worked hard but that work harder untiringly enjoy the fruit of hard work better. If we read this story literally we may disagree with the writer. We wonder how the weakest and oldest man can carry the child, when he himself is unable to work. But there are many moments in our life when even young people like us feel like the three old men. The only solution to our problem at such a moment is to do like the old man.

**Assimilation:** This story brought a great change in my life. Now my philosophy of life has become to work untiringly. There is no limitation of age for a hard worker. If hard work tries to discourage us, we should do even harder work.

### **Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening**

**Robert Frost, USA (1874 – 1963)**



**Literal Comprehension:** This poem composed by Robert Frost, presents the scene of the speaker's returning home at dusk in his own horse sleigh. He stops to enjoy the peace and solitude of the occasion. The snow is falling softly. The woods are attractive. There is no other human to break the silence. But the horse finds no reason for stopping. It is growing dark. There is no house in sight and miles stretch before them. Reflecting on his horse's impatience, the speaker agrees that he should move on to keep the commitments he has made and only then, he can sleep.

**Interpretation:** In this poem, the poet feels the sense of death and life. Dark, evening, solitary place, far from village or society give the sense of death. The poem tells us that we should do our work and journey to go death. The poem tells us that we should do our work and journey to go miles. Similarly, the poem also imparts us that although beauty and peace of the world and our personal burdens may interrupt us from fulfilling our duty, we should move on to fulfill our promises and responsibilities to humanity before we die. In other words, it can be thought of as a statement of man's everlasting responsibility. A man should

walk through the dark and nothingness, but he/she should not be attracted towards temptation.

**Critical Thinking:** This poem is a symbolic poem. Here the forest, snow etc symbolize the hardship of life. And, the horse sleep means he has many responsibilities and duties in life to do before he dies. This poem is very beautiful one. We can notice the rhyming pattern to mark its beauty. Every third line of each stanza rhymes with other three lines of the following stanzas. In the last stanza, the third line has the same rhyming pattern, which suggests that there will be no new stanza, It shows that simple words make a beautiful poem. It as a symbolic poem compares our life with the events of that evening. Like in our life there are problems, hardship but we are compelled to go ahead without stopping. Here the owner is the god because all things on the earth are created by god and he is the owner of these things but he is unseen and far from here. We have many things to complete before our death.

**Assimilation:** Generally, life and death poems by romantic poets are definitely interesting and beautifully composed. The analogy between life and the worldly things is very much lifelike. The poem reminds us that our life is very short but we have to do many things before our death. This world of god is very beautiful and we can enjoy a lot because he does nothing us; he has left for us. Like him, I also get a lot of inspiration from this poem. When I feel sad and unable to do anything I read this poem. This poem gives me a lesson of human life and responsibility. It makes us aware about our life and its length as well as our duties to be done before death. Like the poet, I am very much conscious about our life, duties and death.

## A Tale

**Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala, Nepal (1914 – 1982)**

**Translated and edited by Shreedhar Lohani**



**Literal Comprehension:** Once upon time, a man went in to the jungle and started penance to win supreme knowledge and godhood. He conquered his flesh and mind and achieve a state of unending meditative delight. Indra, the king of gods was afraid that the sage might seized his throne through penance. Then he sent a beautiful nymph to destroyed the sage's penance. The attractor posture of he nymph in the river made the sage open his eyes involuntarily. Then both of them married and led a domestic life. They help the needy people in the village.

But the villagers were suspicious of him and they always blamed the woman for his downfall, but the sage had the same inner peace even when he was leading the domestic life.

**Interpretation:** This story might be trying to tell us that after you get supreme knowledge, it is not necessary for you to live in the jungle, and that you will enjoy the same happiness everywhere. It may also be interpreted to mean that to an enlightened person the joy derive from any source is similar.

**Critical Thinking:** For modern people this story is unacceptable from many point of view. Are god there in the heaven? Are god so envious (jealous) of human beings? Are god so helpless that they really need the help of ordinary human beings?

**Assimilation:** This story reminded me the story of Vishwamitra and Menaka a nymph, had destroyed the penance of the sage Vishwamitra and they had become the parents of Sakuntala. It also convince me how powerful sexual passion is. It never dies. I have understood my own passion batter and tried to use it correctly.

## **Ethics**

**Linda Pastan, USA (1932)**



**Literal Comprehension:** This poem is composed by Linda Pastan in which she express her visiting a museum and looking at the Rembrandt painting. This makes her remember an ethics calss she had taken many years ago. Each fall the teacher presented the same question to the students; which would they choose if they were force by a fire in a museum to save either an old woman or a Rembrandt painting? The question had little meaning for the students, who were restless on hard chairs and who were little for pictures or old are, but each year they would half-hearted. Alternate their answer was one year for life, the next for art. To try or make the question more relevant to her life, the poet admits she would try to picture the old women as her grandmother. One year feeling clever, the poet decides herself. Saying this, the poet was placing the burden of the responsibility of choosing on someone else. This fall the poet finds herself as an old woman in a museum, before a real Rembrandt. As she studies the painting, she notices the colors are darker than autumn, darker even the winter. The painter's colors on the canvas are those deep colors seen at the end of a season. In the text line, however, she sees that through these dark colors earth's most radiant elements burn. The

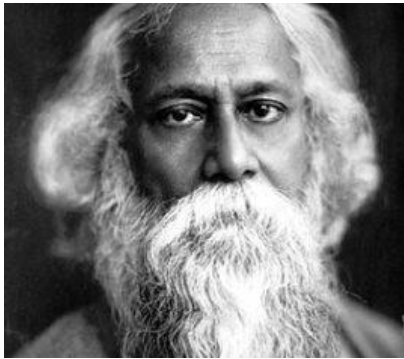
final lines suggest wisdom and a comprehension that only comes with age. Now she understands the value of the painting, as she could not as a young girl. She remembers how little meaning either pictures or old age than had for her. The restless studies, now a mature woman, place equal value on life, art and nature. The restless students in the ethics class at the start of the poem can know nothing about old age, or about art, or even about natural life cycles – and they certainly cannot save one or the other from the death or destruction that awaits them all.

**Interpretation:** The speaker in this poem has described very much impressive incident in her life. As this poem also deals with death and life, she seems to accepting her own approaching death rather than being depressed by it. She compares her youth and elderly life with a painting. In fact, the similarity with the Rembrandt painting carries an affirmation of life. Only as an old woman has been able to appreciate the power of the painting and the mystical ways in which human life, art and nature are linked. By the end of the poem, readers have been led to see that between spring and fall, between the shallowness of youth and the depth of old age, when one can finally experience life's more powerful truths. We can say that woman, painting and season all are changeable. No one can remain constant. As the season change so, the life of a woman changes. On the other hand as a painting after some time changes its color, so the life of human also changes. No one can stop change or time that ultimately leads death, decay or ruin.

**Critical Thinking:** This poem is comparison and remembrance of past and present with a painting and season or woman. The poem has conversational tone; the poet relates a personal experience from the past that takes on new significance in the present. Written in a simple language, use of figurate language, the poem tells a story in two parts, the second part drawing meaning from the first of its two parts defined as clear rhetorical units. Parallelism, repetition, and irony are used in this poem suggest that it is beyond the ability of children to determine complex moral issue. This is an analogy of life with a painting. Though the poem focuses on the narrator's personal feelings, it has a good message of life for every human being. Like her, our life is a very changeable life, as the darkness and color of painting changes, so our life also fades and leads ultimately to death. There is value of every age to people.

**Assimilation:** After reading this poem, I came to realize some knowledge of life, beauty, change as well as value of the people of every age. This poem influenced my way of thinking very much. I would never think about any problem seriously before this. I had no so deep knowledge of the value of an old person and time, now I came to know that ethically we should value old and senior people because they are the sources of knowledge and inspiration. I started to think everything carefully and seriously. It changed my thought.

**Where The Mind is Without Fear**  
**Rabindranath Tagore, India(1961-1941)**



**Literal Comprehension:** The poet imagines the perfect heaven. There people feel no fear and they are equally respected and they can walk raising their heads. There people can get knowledge freely without any disturbances. The world there is no divided in to smaller countries by any kind on narrow border line. People there will speak the truth and work untiringly until they get perfection. There superstition and tradition do not block the region and people always come to the logical conclusion. In such a world of freedom the poet wants god to wake up all his countrymen.

**Interpretation:** This poem might be trying to tell us the value of reason, knowledge, freedom, universality and honesty. The poet may be trying to create some kind of utopia, that is , an ideal and perfect place where everyone lives in harmony and everything is for the best.

**Critical Thinking:** This is a prose poem. It is read like a conversation. The poet is talking to the almighty father. It may sound idealistic but it is the poet who can imagine a batter world. This king of should our target. We should try to reach it as closely as possible.

**Assimilation:** This poem has thought be to live a fearless life. It has also inspired me to live a batter life. It has made me forget my present unhappy condition and imagine a utopian world.

## New Year

**Parijat (1934 – 1993)**

**Translated by Padma Devkota**



**Literal Comprehension:** This poem is composed by Parijat. Here, when the speaker sees the mind that chases March away and the sun which climbs up the hill, she realizes the arrival of the New Year. She can pre-assume that a New Year day has arrived by seeing the nightingale flying here and there, and buds of flowers.

The third stanza begins with “but”, and it shows the contrast in the poet’s thinking. When New Year comes, we expect some new thing but the poet again describes the same old thing. She sees the mason wasps returning lazily to their same old nests, which is in the dark and dirty ceiling of her house. The arrival of New Year should have brought new thing but the mind is busy in same old dreams. Seeing this, she feels to paint the nature afresh.

**Interpretation:** The poem brings reversal in expectation of the readers. The poem consists of 12 lines. The first six lines describe the changes brought by the arrival of New Year. Then the seventh line begins the contrast but the poem does not include any contrast rather it describes the same old workings. The last two lines show the poet’s desire to rebel against nature.

**Critical thinking:** The poem teaches a lesson that life without changes has no value. All the routine works are meaningless if there is no change. The poet enjoys the arrival of New Year; but, soon she remembers all her works does not guarantee the changes and freshness in life.

**Assimilation:** I find the speaker pessimistic towards life. We should have determination. If there is no change after our work and determination, we should understand that our work is not sufficient to bring changes in life. We should take lesson from our part.





# Flax-Golden Tales

## 1. Yudhisthira's Wisdom

According to a Hindu scripture Yudhisthira was the man with profound wisdom. Once he was travelling with his other four brothers and the day was very sunny and hot. They were very tired and thirsty, so wanted to drink water. Yudhisthira sent his one brother to fetch water from a nearby lake. Hours passed but the brother didn't come back. He sent his second brother, he also disappeared. He sent the third as well as the fourth ones, but they also didn't return.

Finally, he travelled himself and found all of his brothers dead near the lake. When he was near the corpses of his brothers, Yaksha (water god, by the way) appeared and warned him not to touch anything there unless he answers his questions. Yudhisthira agreed to answer Yaksha's questions.

Yaksha started asking.

"Tell me Yudhisthira what makes the sun shine?"

"The power of God!" Yudhisthira answered.

"What is man's surest weapon against danger?"

"Courage! Courage is his surest weapon in danger."

"What gives more to man than even the earth does? What feeds him and sustains him and makes him strong?"

"A mother, surely. A mother is more than the earth."

"When does a man become loved by his fellows?"

When he gives up pride."

"What is that which makes a man happy when he has lost it?"

"What can a man give up and immediately become rich?"

"Desire."

Yaksha asked his final question "What are the most surprising things about humans?"

"Indifference to the inevitability of death! People see everyone dying before their eyes, but they don't realize that they will also have to die one day"

Mr. Yaksha was very happy with Yudhisthira's answers and happily revived all of his dead brothers.

## 1. Write the story Of "Yudhisthira's wisdom" from the point of View of the Yaksha.

Ans: - I am Yama, the heavenly father of Yudhisthira, the Pandavas of Mahabharata. It is the story related to the time when the Pandavas were in exile. I had to test the wisdom of my son. If in any way it had been eroded due to problems of life. I turned myself a Yaksha and waited for the chance, in the forest where they, the Pandavas were in exile, in hiding. It was a very hot day, and the Pandavas were chasing a deer. They all become very thirsty and sat under the shade of a tree to rest. The youngest Pandava, Sahadeva, was gone to look for water. After searching for some time, he came near the pond which I had implanted. I kept watch there, in a vanished condition. When he wanted to drink water from there, I stopped him and asked him to first answer my questions. He did not see me, he only heard my voice. So he thought that the sound was perhaps mistake of his ears. He ignored my warning and tried to drink water. I made him unconscious.

For very long, when Sahadeva did not return, Nakula was sent. He also came near my pond, and had to face the same result. In this same way Arjuna and Bhima also had the same consequence. Finally Yudhisthira himself came, but he chose to answer the questions first before drinking water. He was also sad seeing his four younger brothers lying in that condition. I started asking him question like, "what made the sun shine: what is man's surest weapon against danger" etc. He answered the questions difficult question, to test his wisdom. I Offered him in the life of one of his brothers back, for the wise answers he had given, I thought he might demand Bhima or Arjuna back, who were very strong fighters, and who would help him in future fight of Mahabharata(Kurukshetra). But to my surprise, he demanded the life of Nakula or Sahadeva. I was surprised, and asked the reason for it .His answer was full with wisdom. He said that righteousness and truth was the only weapon with a man. Other things are of no use without them. Since him, a son of Kunti was alive, so it was only justified that a son of his step-mother, Madri, should also be alive (Nakula & Sahadeva were Madri's son).

I was very impressed by his wisdom. So, firstly, I exposed myself and then restored the consciousness of all the four Pandavas. After that I gave them the boom of victory and success, in future, and came back to my heavily abode, satisfied.

## **2. The Brave Little Parrot**

Once, long ago, the Buddha was born as a little parrot. One day, a storm broke upon her forest home. Lightning flashed, thunder crashed, and a dead tree, struck by lightning, burst into flames. Sparks leapt on the wind and soon the forest was ablaze. Terrified animals ran wildly in every direction, seeking safety from the flames and smoke "Fire! Fire!" cried the little parrot. "Run! Run to the river!". Flapping her wings, she flung herself out into the fury of the storm, and, rising higher, flew towards the safety of the river. But as she flew she could see that many animals were trapped, surrounded by the flames below, with no chance of escape. Suddenly, a desperate idea, a way to save them, came to her. She rated to the river, dipped herself in the water, and flew back over the now raging fire. The heat rising up from the burning forest was like the heat of an oven. The thick smoke made breathing almost unbearable. A wall of flames shot up now on one side, now on the other. Crackling flames leapt and danced before her. Twisting and turning through the mad maze of fire, the little parrot flew bravely on. At last, over the center of the forest, she shook her wings and released the few drops of water which still clung to her feathers. The tiny drops tumbled like jewels down in the heart of the blaze and vanished with an hssssssssss.

Then the little parrot once more flew back through the flames and smoke to the river, dipped herself in the cool water, and flew back again over the burning forest. Back and forth she flew, time and time again, from the river to the forest, from the burning forest to the river. Her feathers were charred. Her feet were scorched. Her lungs ached. Her eyes, stung by smoke, burned red as coals. Her mind spun as dizzily as the spinning sparks. But still the little parrot flew on.

At this time, some of the Devas, gods of a happy realm, were floating high overhead in their cloud palaces of ivory and gold. They happened to look down and they saw the little parrot flying through the flames. They pointed at her with perfect hands. Between mouthfuls of honeyed foods they exclaimed, "Look at that foolish bird!".She's trying to put out a raging forest fire with a few sprinkles of water! How ridiculous! How absurd! And they laughed.

But one of those Gods did not laugh. Strangely moved, he changed himself into a golden eagle and flew down, down towards the little parrot's fiery path. The little parrot was just nearing the flames again when the great eagle, with eyes like molten gold appeared at her side. "Go back, little bird!" said the eagle in a solemn and majestic voice. "Your task is hopeless! A few drops of water can't put out a forest fire! Cease now and save you — before it's too late.

But the little parrot only continued to fly on through the smoke and flames. She could hear the great eagle flying above her as the heat grew fiercer, calling out, "Stop, foolish little parrot! Save yourself! Save yourself!" "I don't need a great, shining eagle" coughed the little parrot, "to give me advice like that. My own mother, the dear bird, might have told me such things long ago. Advice! (Cough, cough) I don't need advice. I just (cough) need someone to help".

And the god, who was that great eagle, seeing the little parrot flying through the flames, thought suddenly of his own privileged kind. He could see them floating high up above. Yes, there they were, the carefree gods, still laughing and talking while many animals cried out in pain and fear from among the flames below. Seeing that, he grew ashamed, and a single desire was kindled in his heart. God though he was, he just wanted to be like that brave little parrot and to help.

"I will help!" he exclaimed, and flushed with these new feelings, he began to weep. Stream after stream of sparkling tears poured from his eyes. Wave upon wave they washed down like the cooling rain upon the fire, upon the forest, upon the animals, and upon the little parrot herself.

Where those tears fell, the flames died down, and the smoke began to clear. The little parrot washed and bright, rocketed about the sky laughing for joy. 'Now that's more like it!' she exclaimed.

The eagle's tears dripped from burned branches and soaked into the scorched earth. Where those tears glistened, new life pushed quickly forth—shoots, stems, and leaves. Buds unfurled and blossoms opened. Green grass pushed up from among still-glowing cinders. All the animals looked at one another in amazement. Washed by those tears they were whole and well. Not one had been harmed. Up above, in the clear blue sky, they could see their friend, the little parrot, looping and soaring in delight. When hope was gone, somehow she had saved them. "Hurray!" they cried. "Hurray for the brave little parrot, and for this sudden, miraculous rain!"

### **Interpretation:**

Brave Little Parrot is from an ancient Jataka tale from India. Found in *More Best-loved Stories Told at the National Storytelling Festival*, (August House, 1992.) Martin has published other versions of this tale in *The Hungry Tigress: Buddhist Myths, legends and Jataka Tales* (Yellow Moon Press, 1999) and as a children's picture book, *The Brave Little Parrot* (G.P. Putnam's, 1998, illustrated by Susan Gaber.)

A gray parrot witnesses the start of a forest fire. She knows she can fly away to safety, but when she sees the devastation and other forest dwellers trapped by the fire, she tries to save them. She calls on the other animals to help, but they tell her it is hopeless. Bravely, she does

what she can; carrying small drops of water on a leaf to pour on the enormous fire. In the heavens, some gods look down on the scene, laughing at the ridiculous situation. When one god takes the shape of an eagle and advises the small bird to stop and save herself, the parrot retorts, "I don't need advice. I just need help!" Touched by her courage and ashamed of his useless and selfish life, the eagle starts to weep. His tears quench the flames and bring new life. The little parrot is rewarded with colorful feathers where hers have been signed. Gabber's paintings are rich with lush greens and flaming oranges. The use of small paintings boxed within a larger boxed background results in an effective design element. This technique focuses viewers' awareness of how the small actions of one creature, though insignificant in the larger world, can contribute to that world's salvation. One such picture, a small drop of water framed above a roaring fire, is touching in its simplicity and power.

**1. Apply the four levels of interacting the text to the story, "The Brave Little Parrot".**

Ans.:- Literal Comprehension: Long ago, the Buddha was born as a little Parrot. The forest in which he lived was caught with fire and the animals began to run away very desperately in order to find safety. By seeing the plight of the animals the parrot decided to help them. He, then darted (gone) to the river, dipped himself in the water, and flew back over the raging (danki raheko) fire and sprinkled some drops of water but they vanished very easily. The parrot did the same thing time and time again. By seeing such hopeless activities of the parrot one of the gods was deeply moved. The god, then, disguised himself in the form of eagle and approached (came near) the parrot. The god advised him to save his life as he could do nothing to put out the fire. The parrot replied by saying that he needed help not the advise. Now, the god in the form of eagle was ashamed, and began to shed tears in such tears in such a way that the fire was extinguished very soon. Hence, all the animals in the forest were saved.

Interpretation: - This story may be trying to tell us that one should selflessly help those who are in need of help. Selflessly help those who are in need of help. Selflessly helping others is reward in itself. Besides that, this story is also trying to convey the message that to help other during the crisis is serving the god. This story is full of moral lessons.

Critical Thinking:-The story is a little farfetched and gets one thinking of the possibility of such events. They really gods or Deva? However these are parables of pebbles with moral lessons, so its purpose may be justified.

Assimilation: - After reading this story. I am reminded about many Buddhist legends or Jataka tells which a parables to show self-lessens to annihilate to destroy. I desire becomes free from the cycle of rebirth like the Buddha.

### **3. Ahab and Naboth**

Ahab and Jezebel lived in the palace at Samaria. Right next door to the palace was a well kept vineyard owned by a man named Naboth. This vineyard had belonged to his father, and his grandfather and others in the family from the time when they came into the land, hundreds of years before this.

The law which God had given them said that they were not to sell their land, but pass it on from father to son. Ahab looked with longing eyes at this vineyard and thought what a fine garden it would make for his palace. One day as Naboth was working in his vineyard the king came to him and offered to buy it. Naboth said, "I cannot sell it. The law of God forbids

me to sell this land which came to me from my fathers" This made Ahab very angry. Ahab went back to the palace with a heavy heart and was most displeased. He spent the day sulking in his room and would not go down to dinner. Jezebel came to see what was wrong. He told her that Naboth had refused to sell his vineyard to him. Jezebel said, "Are you really the King of Israel? Don't worry; I will get you the vineyard" Jezebel wrote letters to some of the men in the city, and signed Ahab's name to them. In the letters she asked them to arrange a celebration and invite Naboth to have a special seat of honor. Then she asked them to bribe two men to come and make false charges against him. Then as a punishment, they were to take Naboth outside the city and stone him to death. The men did as Jezebel asked them to do, and Naboth was stoned to death. They then sent word to Jezebel that he was dead. Jezebel said to Ahab, "You can go now and take possession of Naboth's vineyard which he would not sell you, for he is now dead. So Ahab went and claimed the vineyard.

God spoke to Elijah the prophet and said "Go to Ahab and give him a message from me" Ahab was surprised to see Elijah and said to him, "Have you found me, mine enemy?" Elijah answered, "I have found you because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of God. God will punish you for this. All of your sons will die or be killed and all of your family will be taken away. In the place where Naboth died the dogs shall lick your blood. Your wife Jezebel shall be eaten by dogs. All this is because of your wickedness" When Ahab heard these dreadful words, he rent or tore his clothes, and put on rough sackcloth as people did when they were very sorrowful. Then the Lord said, " Because Ahab has humbled himself before me, and seems sorry, I will not bring all these hard things whilst he lives, but when his son is king" Not long after this Ahab was killed in battle. He had been in his chariot and an archer shot an arrow through his body. They brought the chariot back to the pool at Samaria to be washed. There at the very place where Naboth had been killed the dogs licked up Ahab's blood from the chariot.

Ahab's son became king, but not many years had passed before judgment had fallen on the whole family just as God had said. All of his sons were killed. Jezebel met her death in a dreadful way. Servants threw her from an upstairs window into a courtyard where she was killed. The dogs ate her flesh, just as God had said. Because Ahab and Jezebel went their own way and refused the love of God, awful judgment came upon them and the whole family. Their name today stands for wickedness and ungodliness.

The lesson we learn from this is: Because they had refused the living God they had only idols to help when in trouble or times of temptation, and an idol has no power to help. They thought that God's way was too narrow so they chose their own way. It brought unhappiness to them and to all their family while they lived and an eternity shut away from God in hell, the place that God prepared for the devil and his wicked angels. But no one needs to go that way, for God prepared another way, His straight, narrow way. We may enter that way through our Lord Jesus Christ, who took our punishment upon himself. He receives all who come to Him.

#### **Four levels:**

Literal comprehension: - Naboth the Jezzebelite had a beautiful vineyard in Samaria Ahab the king of Samaria. Coveted (to take it forcefully) this vineyard. Which was near the palace? Ahab offered to exchange the vineyard for another one Naboth refused to give the vineyard saying that it was the inheritance of his far father (Inheriting family property). Ahab felt frustrated because he could not buy Naboth vineyard. Ahab could neither eat nor sleep. His wife Jezebel found the cause of Ahab's depressed mood. She told him that as he was the rural

of Samaria. He should eat well as be happy. She said that she would acquire Naboth vineyard for him. Then she wrote letters to the elders and noble's to proclaim a fast a wicked palm to set 10 sons of Belial to bear witness that Naboth had committed blasphemy against god and the king.

So the elders proclaimed a fast and the sons of Belial whole witness against Naboth, Saying that he had committed the crime of blasphemy against god and the king. Punishment for blasphemy was to stone the person to death. Naboth carried outside the city and was stoned to death after Naboth and Death. Ahab took possession of Naboth vineyard. Then god sent a message to a prophet named Elizah to go and meet Ahab the king of Somaria. God directed Elizah to tell Ahab that he had committed two sins First he had killed Naboth and second he had taken away Naboth land. Elizah told Ahab that he would have to pay for both his sins Ahab felt Astounded as to how quickly the word had found out about his evil deeds. Elizah told him that the same dogs which had licked the blood of Naboth would like his blood too.

Interpretation:-The Bible may be telling us that we will have to pay for our sins and evil deeds because god is watching all the times known everything.

Critical thinking: - it was surprising to see Ahab being greedy. He was the king of Somaria and there were many pieces of land which he could buy. He did not need to crave (to have a dative) for Naboth vineyard. Jezebel has been characterized as a wicked queen fleer action of falsely implicating Naboth so that he could be stoned to death is unpardonable.

#### **4. If Not Higher**

##### **Four Levels**

Literal Comprehension: Early every Friday morning, the Rabbi of Nemirov would disappear at the time of penitential prayers ( प्राश्चित्तको प्राथना ). No one saw him anywhere and all the prayers thought that he would go to heaven at that time. But there was a Litvak who did not believe it. He tried to find out where Rabbi was. One evening he crept ( घस्रियो ) under the Rabbi's bed and he remained awake. Before dawn ( मिरमिरे ) the Rabbi groaned ( वेदना निकाल्यो ) for the poor sick people of Israel.

After one hour, he went to the kitchen took an axe and visited house to house of town people. He heard their groans ( वेदनाहरु ) and lastly went to the jungle. The Litvak kept on following him. The Rabbi felled a dead tree and made firewood. Then he took the firewood to a sick poor Jew woman. He lent her the firewood for six cents. He also burnt fire for the woman and at that time he recited the three courses of the penitential prayers. Then he returned. One Litvak saw all his activities and became his true disciple ( मेला ). He thought the Rabbi would go higher than the heaven if such place was.

Interpretation: The writer may be trying to tell us the importance of Selfless human service. To please the god most, one should help poor, sick and needy people who are in great trouble. On the other hand, the writer shows that suspicious people like Litvak have no faith in religion but they should be convinced practically true worshippers of humanity have as high place as Moses.

Critical Thinking: Although this story teaches us a great moral ( नैतिक ) lesson, some of the writer's views are disagreeable. Can a man go to the heaven in his life time? Does a true disciple of the god disappear at the time of prayer? Is it possible for a man to sleep under the

bed whole night undetected ( कसैले थाहा नपाइकन )? Do modern people believe on the existence of gods and heaven? Can we find such person who goes people house to house to know their troubles? From these facts, I don't totally support the writer's saying.

Assimilation: This story gives a high moral lesson to the readers. After reading this story I remembered a poem ' About Ben Adhen'. One night, Abou Ben adhen was asleep and in his dream an angel came to his room. He was collecting the names of those who prayed the god. 'Abou' asked the angel if his name was in the list. The angel replied negatively. Then 'Abou' requested him to write his name as one who loved his fellow man. Then, the angel vanished. The next night, the angel again came to his room. He had the list of people whom god had blessed. Abou found his name on the top of the list. The story also tells us that service to mankind is service to god is a great moral lesson.

### **1. Apply the four levels of interacting the text to &quot;If Not Higher&quot;;**

Ans: - Literal comprehension: Early Every Friday morning at a time of penitential prayers, the rabbi of Nemirov would vanish .He was nowhere to be seen. Other People were of the opinion that during the prayers, he would go to heaven while the Litvak did not believe that openly. In order to find out the whereabouts of the rabbi, the Litvak managed him to go secretly to his room on the eve of the penitential prayers and hid under the bed. Early morning when others were praying for the people of Israel, the rabbi disguised himself as a peasant and left the house. After sometimes, he went to the nearby forest and cut the firewood and made a bundle of firewood. He, then, entered the house of poor Jewish women and persuaded her to buy the firewood but she did not buy as she was poor, than, he gave the firewood and candled the fire to her, He then started reciting the different portions of penitential prayers. Having seen such humanistic deeds of the rabbi, the Litvak was deeply moved and from that time onwards, he becomes his disciple.

Interpretation: This story may be trying to tell us that doing good deeds on earth may be a more exalted activity than doing God's will in heaven. Besides that, this story also focuses on the humanitarian activities that make a person great and noble. To do good deeds on this earth is a great reward on another world. Only by doing prayer god is not happy rather god becomes happy in doing humanitarian deeds and helping the needy people as the rabbi has done in the story

Critical thinking: This story sounds highly idealistic as it delivers the moral lessons. In this selfish and materialistic world, no one will get the virtuous character like the rabbi in the story. The rabbi like people becomes simply laughing stock in the modern society. Anyway, the story is good to deliver the moral lessons.

### **Summarize the plot of "If Not Higher" in one sentence.**

Ans: - The rabbi of Nemirov happened to disguise himself as a peasant during the penitential prayers, the festival of Jews, and went to help the needy people, however, general people would think that he would go the heaven during the prayers but the Litvak identified the reality of the rabbi by his skeptical nature.

## **5. Phaedo**

Two characters Phaedo and Echecrates were having discussion about the last moment of

Socrates. Phaedo was a devoted disciple of Socrates. He was present there at the last moment of Socrates' death; he gave the following description to Echecrates. Socrates had been accused of misleading the youth and causing them to hold free opinions. After the trial he had not been immediately executed (punishment of death) because there was a tradition in Greece to send ships to Delos in the name of Apollo and due to this incidence the execution was postponed, after the ship from Delos will arrive, he would be executed. When the ship was arrived, on that all Socrates' friends and relatives had come to the prison. The day had been passed in conversation as was his way in prison and out. After the long philosophical discussion about soul, Socrates went and took a bath. He sent all his family members home. Then the Jailer came to him by weeping in and said that Socrates had to drink poison that day. He cried and went away; Socrates didn't afraid he praised that men and sent one of his men to bring the poison. When Crito said that his master could drink it a little later, Socrates replied that he would make himself ridiculous in his eyes. It was better not to stick to life if he did not give him anything. Socrates took the cup of hemlock and swallowed in one breath. Then his friends began to weep and he stopped them. The poison was creeping up to his heart. His last words were to his friends Crito, asking him to offer a cock to the healing god, Asclepius. Asclepius is the Greek god of Medicine, and an offering would typically to make to thank the god for curing a disease, Socrates suggestion in his dying words is that he has been cured of the disease that is life, and should therefore be thankful to Asclepius. For as long as we are alive our soul is tempted and distracted by the flesh. Only thorough death can our soul achieve that release that "cures" if these ills.

### **Summary**

Phaedo was a disciple of Socrates. He was the witness of Socrates' death. Here, in the story Phaedo describes about the trial and execution of Socrates Echecrates asks what was done to Socrates and what he had said at the time of his death. Socrates was a lover of truth and justice. He was brave and wise. He thought to die speaking the truth than to live telling a lie. He did not like to live in false way.

At his death time, his wife and children had attended to melt his heart. But he did not move a bit. He convinced them quite satisfactorily and taught them a lesson to truth and his wife and children went home without feeling depressed.

Socrates was accused of misleading the youths. But he was leading them towards truth and humanity. The authority gave him enough time to confess his fault. But brave Socrates never bent. Before drinking hemlock, He said, "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting"

### **Four Levels**

Interpretation: The writer of this story may be trying to teach the lesson of truth, justice and humanity. He is also trying to encourage ourselves to hold truth even at the death point. We also learn from the story that one should not fall behind to die for the cause of truth and justice. Dying bravely is far more satisfactory than living cowardly. The writer also believes on the life after death. For him, only the soul is departed but the death like Socratic's gets eternal piece. To die for the cause of truth is to depart for the land of heaven.

Critical Thinking: After reading this story the readers can find many disagreeable points. Can one enjoy heavenly happiness after death? What about rebirth? Can a man survive always holding truth and ideality (cfbz)? Does a man drink poison before his wife and children leaving them in despair a man drink poison before his wife and children leaving them in



despair? What about the existence of heaven? Do the modern people follow such principle like Socrates? From this fact, I don't totally agree with the writer.

Assimilation: After reading this story, I learnt a great lesson about truth and justice. I will also try to speak the truth and I will never fall behind to die for the cause of truth and justice. "A coward dies hundred times before his death" is a popular proverb. Timid life is no worth living. So I will always hold truth, righteousness and justice.

## **6. The Cricket**

A long time ago, cricket fighting caught on in the imperial court, with the emperor leading the fad. A local magistrate in Huayin, who wanted to win the favor of the monarch, tried in every way to get him the best fighting crickets. He had a strategy for doing so: He managed to get a cricket that was very good at fighting. He then made his subordinates go to the heads of each village and force them to send in a constant supply of fighting crickets. He would send to the imperial court the crickets that could beat the one he was keeping. Theoretically, everything should have worked smoothly. However, as the magistrate was extremely zealous to please the emperor, he meted out harsh punishment on any village heads who failed to accomplish their tasks. The village heads in turn shifted the burden to the poor villagers, who had to search for the crickets. If they failed to catch them, they had to purchase them from someone else, or they had to pay a levy in cash. The small insects suddenly became a rare commodity. Speculators hoarded good crickets, buying them at a bargain and selling them for an exorbitant price. Many village heads worked hand in hand with the speculators to make profits. In so doing, they bankrupted many a family.

Cheng Ming was one such villager. The head of his village delegated part of his duties to him because he found Cheng Ming easy to push around. Cheng Ming did not want to bully his fellow villagers as the village head did him, so he often had to pay cash out of his own pocket when he failed to collect any competent crickets. Soon the little proper ties he had were draining away, and he went into a severe depression. One day, he said to his wife that he wanted to die. "Death is easy, but what will our son do without you?" asked his wife, glancing at their only son, sleeping on the炕. "Why can't we look for the crickets ourselves instead of buying them? Perhaps we'll strike some good luck." Cheng Ming gave up the idea of suicide and went to search for crickets. Armed with a tiny basket of copper wires for catching crickets and number of small bamboo tubes for holding them, he went about the tedious task. Each day he got up at dawn and did not return until late in the evening. He searched beneath brick debris, dike crevices, and in the weeds and bushes. Days went by, and he caught only a few mediocre crickets that did not measure up to the magistrate's standards. His worries increased as the dead line drew closer and closer.

The day for cricket delivery finally came, but Cheng Ming could not produce any good ones. He was clubbed a hundred times on the buttocks, a form of corporal punishment in the ancient Chinese judicial system. When he was released the next day, he could barely walk. The wound on his buttock confined him to bed for days and further delayed his search for crickets. He thought of committing suicide again. His wife did not know what to do. Then they heard about a hunchbacked fortune teller who was visiting the village. Cheng Ming's wife went to see him. The fortune teller gave her a piece of paper with a picture on it. It was a pavilion with a jiashan (rock garden) behind it. On the bushes by the jiashan sat a fat male cricket. Beside it, however, lurked a large toad, ready to catch the insect with its long, elastic tongue. When the wife got home, she showed the paper to her husband. Cheng Ming sprang

up and jumped to the floor, forgetting the pain in his buttocks. "This is the fortune teller's hint at the location where I can find perfect cricket to accomplish my task!" he exclaimed. "But we don't have a pavilion in our village," his wife reminded him. "Well, take a closer look and think. Doesn't the temple on the east side of our village have a rock garden? That must be it." So saying, Cheng Ming limped to the temple with the support of a makeshift crutch. Sure enough, he saw the cricket, and the toad squatting nearby in the rock garden at the back of the temple. He caught the big, black male cricket just before the toad got hold of it. Back home, he carefully placed the cricket in a jar he had prepared for it and stowed the jar away in a safe place. "Everything will be better tomorrow," he gave a sigh of relief and went to tell his best friends in the village the good news. Cheng Ming's nine-year-old son was very curious. Seeing his father was gone, he took the jar and wanted to have a peek at the cricket. He was removing the lid carefully, when the big cricket jumped out and hopped away. Panicked, the boy tried to catch the fleeing cricket with his hands, but in a flurry; he accidentally squashed the insect when he finally got hold of it. "Good heavens! What're you going to say to your father when he comes back?" the mother said in distress and dread. Without a word, the boy went out of the room, tears in his eyes. Cheng Ming became distraught when he saw the dead cricket. He couldn't believe that all his hopes had been dashed in a second. He looked around for his son, vowing to teach the little scoundrel a good lesson. He searched inside and outside the house, only to locate him in a well at the corner of the courtyard. When he fished him out, the boy was already dead. The father's fury instantly gave way to sorrow. The grieving parents laid their son on the bier and lamented over his body the entire night. As Cheng Ming was dressing his son for burial the next morning, he felt the body still warm. Immediately he put the boy back on the bier, hoping that he would revive. Gradually the boy came back to life, but to his parents' dismay, he was unconscious, as if he were in a trance. The parents grieved again for the loss of their son.

Suddenly they heard a cricket chirping. The couple traced the sound to a small cricket on the door step. The appearance of the cricket, however, dashed their hopes, for it was very small. "Well, it's better than nothing," Cheng Ming thought. He was about to catch it, when it jumped nimbly on to a wall, chirping at him. He tiptoed to ward it, but it showed no sign of fleeing. Instead, wrenching Ming came a few steps closer, the little cricket jumped onto his chest.

Though small, the cricket looked smart and energetic. Cheng Ming planned to take it to the village head. Uncertain of its capabilities, Cheng Ming could not go to sleep. He wanted to put the little cricket to the test before sending it to the village head. The next morning, Cheng Ming went to a young man from a rich family in his neighborhood, having heard him boasting about an "invincible" cricket that he wanted to sell for a high price. When the young man showed his cricket, Cheng Ming hesitated, because his little cricket seemed no match for this gigantic insect. To fight this monster would be to condemn his dwarf to death. "There's no way my little cricket could survive a confrontation with your big guy," Cheng Ming said to the young man, holding his jar tight. The young man goaded and taunted him. At last, Cheng Ming decided to take his chances. "Well, it won't hurt to give a try. If the little cricket is a good-for-nothing, what's the use of keeping it anyway?" he thought. When they put the two crickets together in a jar, Cheng Ming's small insect seemed transfixed. No matter how the young man prodded it to fight, it simply would not budge. The young man burst into a guffaw, to the great embarrassment of Cheng Ming. As the young man spurred the little cricket on, its stubbornness seemed to have run out of patience. With great wrath, it charged the giant opponent head on. The sudden burst of action stunned both the young man and Cheng Ming. Before the little creature planted its small but sharp teeth into the neck of the big

cricket, the terrified young man fished the big insect out of the jar just in time and called off the contest. The little cricket chirped victoriously, and Cheng Ming felt exceedingly happy and proud. Cheng Ming and the young man were commenting on the little cricket's extraordinary prowess, when a big rooster rushed over to peck at the little cricket in the jar. The little cricket hopped out of the jar in time to dodge the attack. The rooster then went for it a second time, but suddenly began to shake its head violently, screaming in agony. This sudden turn of events baffled Cheng Ming and the onlookers. When they took a closer look, they could not believe their eyes: The little cricket was gnawing on the rooster's bloody comb. The story of a cricket fighting a rooster soon spread throughout the village and beyond. The next day, Cheng Ming, along with the village head, sent the cricket to the magistrate and asked for a test fight with his master cricket, but the magistrate refused on the ground that Cheng Ming's cricket was too small. "I don't think you have heard its rooster-fighting story," Cheng Ming proclaimed with great pride. "You can't judge it only by its appearance." "Nonsense, how can a cricket fight a rooster?" asked the magistrate. He ordered a big rooster brought to his office, thinking that Cheng Ming would quit telling his tall tales when his cricket became the bird's snack. The battle between the little cricket and the rooster ended with the same result: The rooster sped away in great pain, the little cricket chirping triumphantly on its heels. The magistrate was first astonished and then pleased, thinking that he finally had the very insect that could win him the emperor's favor. He had golden cage manufactured for the little cricket. Placing it cautiously in the cage, he took it to the emperor. The emperor pitted the little cricket against all his veteran combatant crickets, and it defeated them one by one. What amused the emperor most was that the little creature could even dance to the tune of his court music! Extremely pleased with the magic little creature, the emperor rewarded the magistrate liberally and promoted him to a higher position. The magistrate, now a governor, in turn exempted Cheng Ming from his levies in cash as well as crickets. A year later, Cheng Ming's son came out of his stupor. He sat up and rubbed his eyes, to the great surprise and joy of his parents. The first word she uttered to his jubilant parents was, "I'm so tired and hungry." After a hot meal, he told them, "I dreamed that I had become a cricket, and I fought a lot of other crickets. It was such fun! You know what? The greatest fun I had was my fight with a couple of roosters!"

#### **Four Levels:**

**Literal Comprehension:** During Ming Dynasty, the cricket fighting was popular in China. The emperors used to order the village headman to collect the cricket. In a village called Floral Shade, there used to live a man named Make-good, he was assigned a task to search crickets but he could not collect them. For this reason, he got beaten. He was so much frustrated that he even thought of committing suicide. His wife suggested him to go for searching the crickets himself. To make her husband's task easier, Make good's wife consulted a hunch backed fortune teller who produced a paper where there was scene drawn. In that picture, there was a cricket. Make good easily understood that it was a clue for him to search the cricket. As indicated on the paper, Make good reached in the place of rocks where there was a mountain. There was bush on the side of rocks where Make good saw a cricket on it. With a great effort, Make good caught the cricket and kept in a tube at his home. Make good had nine years old son. Fascinated by the cricket, the little boy uncovered the tube and the cricket flew away like a shot. He tried and caught it but the cricket's abdomen and the legs were separated. And the cricket died. The boy realized his mistake and jumped into the well. They took the boy outside and were about to bury him. They found that the boy had a slight light of hope. Make good became happy.

Next day, early in the morning, Make -good saw a cricket which was huge. He tried to catch

it but it flew away. He also saw another cricket. Since it was very small he did not will to catch it but the cricket itself came to Make-good. So, he kept and nourished it. Make-good kept his cricket to fight with local champion cricket, Marshall Green. To his surprise, it won the match. It was presented to the magistrate who finally took the cricket to the emperor. This cricket won all the species of the cricket of the realm. So, the emperor became happy and ordered education minister to offer Make-good a degree. Within a year, Make-good also received hundred acres of land, flocks of ship and oxen. Then he lived happy holding higher status in the family

Interpretation: This story shows us how difficult it is to live in this material world. Under a despotic ruler's rule, a man is not important but what he can contribute determines his life. Make good was left alone when he was unable to collect the crickets. At that time, he even thought of committing suicide. It reflects that if one cannot work, he has no right to survive. Similarly, the story is successful to present that we should be always hopeful for the better future. Had Make good not engaged himself in search of cricket, he would not have gained the property at last. The story provides a lesson that consistency in work is the secret of success. Similarly, it is the story which reflects Chinese culture, belief and their way of life. The hunch backed fortune teller and the respect which Mrs. Make good provides him tells us that how much faith Chinese have to the supernatural force. Similarly the different rank from governor, magistrate to village head provides us the ancient political system of China.

Critical Thinking: the present story The Cricket very beautifully shows the social and belief of the then Chinese society but some questions arise as we go through the text. First of all, a paper comes from nowhere as the hunch backed fortune teller recites some of the magical formula. Can we believe that such power is possessed by a common man? Similarly, make good's nine years son realizes his mistake after killing the cricket. So, he jumps into the well. Why didn't he think if he was so conscious about the importance of cricket before? Moreover, aren't the children afraid of insects? Were the Ming emperors so foolish that they enjoyed the fight of small petty insects? Why not bull and cock? Were Ming emperors so irrational to a degree of education to the man who has searched a mere cricket? Likewise, if fortune teller knew where the cricket was located, why didn't he himself go to search? Can we say fortune teller did not desire property and fame? Except these questions, the story is interesting.

Assimilation : this story made me remembers my childhood days. When I was a child, I used to take my oxen for grazing in the field. There were two oxen in my home which we had named as Ruse and Sindure. Sindure was huge, fat and brown coloured ox. He was brave active and champion to fight. There used to be betting among our friends on the question that whose ox would win the fight. The looser groups had to collect some amount of money to buy the fruits like Mango, Jackfruit, even cucumber and other fruits it was my oxen Sindure which had fed me many cucumbers and mangoes. I agree with the central idea of the story that some animals become a source of happiness in our life. Likewise this story also reminded me cock fighting which was also famous in our locality. I appreciated this story for taking me in my golden childhood days.

## **7. The Sword of Democles**

Literal Comprehension: Dionysius was a famous king of Sicily. He was famous for his cruel treatment. His citizens used to live with a sense of fear every day. They wanted to kill him but they could not do so because of his fear. Moreover, the king used to be surrounded by the

guards and intellectuals all the time. All these intellectuals used to flatter the king for his happiness. Among them, there was a person named Damocles who used to flatter the king beyond the limit. Dionysius was not a weak and vain king. He was not pleased with such flattery. So, he wanted to teach his foolish courtier a moral lesson. For this, the king declared that he would throw a feast and would allow Damocles to experience the honour and happiness of the king. Damocles became happy and boasted over among his friends for the grace of the king. Next day, the feast was conducted. The guests of higher rank arrived. Damocles had been clothed in royal dress. The king ordered him to ascend the throne and the golden crown was placed on his head. The king requested all the people to offer the same respect and honour of the king as they used to pay to Dionysius himself. Damocles was so excited that he felt, once it would be difficult to leave the throne after the feast. He enjoyed delicious food and flattering words though the heavy weight of crown had irritated him. Damocles got a shock when he saw a keen edged sword tied with a slender hair above his throne. If it fell, he was sure to be killed. He requested the king to release him from the terrible position. The king responded that the sword might fall or it might not fall. So, he had to be brave, happy and easier like a king. After the long hours, the feast ended and the sword did not fall. Damocles descended from the throne happily with a realization that wealth and fame doesn't bring necessarily the happiness.

**Interpretation:** This story may be trying to show us the cruel domination of the emperors in the past and some of the causes of such cruelties from the kings. Dionysius had spread fear in the midst of citizen. The people hated him and wanted to slaughter if they got an opportunity. They could not revolt against him because of the groups of intellectuals, who in fact had to support the poor citizens, had themselves started supporting the dictator. Hence this story shows us clearly that the domination, cruelty and anarchy arise when even the educated people fail to do their duty. On the other hand, the story presents that we should never flatter because the happiness which we get after flattering other does not last long like that of Damocles. Likewise the story shows us if we support a bad person, we will always get troubles. In short, the story appeals us to fight against the discrimination collectively transcending our individual benefits.

**Critical Thinking:** An intellectual person is one who fights for the equality, thinks of society rather than himself. Can a person like Dionysius be called a wise and intellectual? It is not only the king but a common man desires to be loved and admired. How can a king Dionysius punish his courtier Damocles who always praised his personality? How can a tilted, sharp and heavy sword be tied with a slight thread of hair? Likewise, the king says all the guests to offer the same respect as they used to do to him. Why does the king himself disobey when Damocles as a king sitting on a mighty throne orders him to release from the throne? Can the king's command be disobeyed? At the end, the story mentions that wealth doesn't bring happiness necessarily, if so, what is the source of happiness? It is not discussed in the story. Is it the service to the other? Then why does not Dionysius help the poor if he is not after the wealth? Except these weak points, the story is interesting and full of moral lessons.

**Assimilation:** I liked this story mainly because of its two features. The first is that it is the factual presentation of so-called intellectuals. My country, Nepal, is a developing country. Though she has produced the best minds, all these learned people are busy in fulfilling their own needs. They support and write articles for the benefit of corrupt leaders. They have not yet used their rational mind to give the justice to the people who are forced to live in the margin of the society. It is because of this ill activity of Nepalese intellectual corruption is prevalent here and the country is back warded. Similarly the story presents us that the source

of suffering is the greediness for power and luxurious life. Had Damocles not been greedy for power, he would not have been in trouble. Instead if he had fought for the rights of people, who knows he might have been a great freedom fighter in the pages of history. In short the story reminds us to live for the society, fulfill our duty rather than being greedy.

**1. Summarize the story. “The Sword of Damocles” in a single Paragraph.**

Ans.:- Dionysius, the strict ruler of Sicily, was well hated and always feared his death. He liked the company of learned men but also had many flatterers in the court. Damocles, a great flatterer always praised the happiness and gift of King Dionysius. Fed up with this, One day Dionysius decided to teach him a lesson and informed that Damocles would be the king and everyone would pay him respect as a king. Dressed in King's clothes and crown, he was made to sit on the throne. At first, In spite of some awkwardness, he began to enjoy the post but suddenly, while looking upward, he saw naked sword hanging by a hair over his head. In great fear of his life, he could not enjoy anything. Then the ceremony is ended and he learned a great lesson.

Literal comprehension: - Dionysius was the king of Sicily in the 4th century B.C. He has both famous and tyrannical. He was surrounded by intelligent courtiers as well as flatterers. Among the flatterers was a foolish courtier called Damocles. He was always lauding talking very highly and praising the king. He aired out his opinion of the king being the happiest person in the world and he sat upon the throne of Sicily. However, Dionysius was not deceived by such flatterers. To amuse himself Dionysius told Damocles that he could sit on the throne the next day during the banquet and know how a king feels.

So the next day, Damocles was clothed in royal robes and was told by the king to wear a golden crown and sit on the throne during the banquet. Damocles sat down on the throne wearing rich silk clothes with the crown on his head. At first he enjoyed the newly gained status, but after a while his head became heavy because of the crown. He was treated like a king, every dish of food to be tasted before it was served to him. To make sure that it was not poisoned. At first Damocles liked being in this position but suddenly his spirits were dampened he looked up and got the shock of his life just above his head was a sword hanging upon a single strand of hair. If the slender hair broke, the sword would kill him instantly. Damocles immediately wanted to get down from the throne, but Dionysius ordered him to remain where he was throughout the banquet. Damocles was terror-stricken as he felt the sword would fall upon his head and take away his life. Paralyzed with fear he could not eat his food to sit on the throne then became an unpleasant experience. He only kept looking at the hanging sword after several hours. The banquet ended and he was more than happy to remove the crown from his head and get down from the throne and become an ordinary subject.

Interpretation: - The writer may be telling us that a high position has its risks and dangers boundless and wealth and power does not always bring happiness and satisfaction. Damocles was a coward who paled for his life.

Critical thinking: - This may be an imaginary story. It is absurd of king to allow a common man to sit upon his throne. King Dionysius was playing a cruel joke by hanging a sword above Damocles head. Flatterers praise people but their words are empty devoid of meaning.

Assimilation: - this story teaches us that we should not be deceived by flatterers and it also makes it clear that to hold high power and greatness. One must be strong and full of courage.

**.What is the main theme of the story, “The Sword of Damocles.”**

Ans. :- People may think that people in power and high position lead a happy life without any tension and trouble but it is not so. The life of king, prince and emperor seem quite happy on the surface level but they too have to undergo with great tension and trouble at times. No doubt, high position has its own charms and glory it has its own risk. It is better to look into the things rather than at the things to know the reality of anything.

### **8. The Library Card**

"The Library Card" is based on the real situations Richard Wright experienced while growing up. The setting was back in time in an era where blacks were known to be ignorant due to the laws of the white man. Blacks were restricted from good education and that means that most of them couldn't read at all and because of this Richard Wright writes his struggles in the Library Card.

Richard Wright would go into this one library and out of the everyone in society there was one kind man; Mr. Falk who tries to help Richard Wright to check out a book and read. However, people like Mr. Gerald who heavily put the burdens of being black on Richard Wright at his apartment. Due to these red necks the separation of whites and blacks caused the distrust and forge that made it hard for Richard Wright to have the right to read. It's a relieve that our society now prosper from this dark era where regardless of what your nationality is you can gain a good education. People are treated equally and with respect. Although, we still have those small groups who believe in the old ways we came a long way. Plus, I can't even believe that people were like that with no compassion and love. The importance of this event in the life of Richard Wright cannot be underestimated. Determination and cunning are tools honed on the whetstone of struggle. This young boy rose above mistrust fed by racism, and solved his craving for books. In today's reality, where technological devices are reducing shelf space and availability of books, we must continue to be concerned about reading skills of all peoples. Books can open minds and change lives. Richard Wright changed his life with a Library Card. Read with and offer books to all children so that they can find their own freedom. In the effort of trying to know more about the white writer (Mencken) who wrote in the favor of the blacks, and got criticisms. Mr. Richard Wright (a Negro) comes to know about so many other writers. He knows not only the writers but also the many other writers who have any sort of bias. He comes to learn about so many books which seem to open the floodgates of information and new worlds that Richard himself is amazed about how could people write so much which they have known. This also clears the clouds of prejudices held by blacks against the writers. But it also helps certain misconceptions held by Negroes (including the writer) to get cleared. The writer realizes the weakness of Negroes themselves. He finds the Negroes themselves responsible for their condition. He realizes the bias and exploitation between the Negroes themselves. But after all it is only the bookish knowledge that Richard gets. He does not get the real feel of human nature.

### **Summary**

This lesson describes about the social and colour discrimination in America. A Negro boy while reading 'The American Mercury' saw a white man called H.L.Mencken being abused by another Whiteman. It surprised the black boy. He got bitter experience of the social and colour discrimination. He knew that while people treated the black as slave or non-men. Mr. Mencken being himself the white man had protested the behavior of the white. So, he had been badly attacked by his words.

The black boy had helped many white gentlemen to collect books from library. He also

thought of getting help from them. He knew that he would not get books to read because he was black an Irish catholic who was the boy's close gentleman seemed ready to help the boy. The man gave his library card to the boy to use and also warned him to use it properly so that he would not get any trouble. In this way the boy began to read books. The boy had language problem but he struggled hard to read many books. He began to understand the themes of many books. He knew that English language. He consulted English grammar and dictionary his education made him different from the other black people. He began to hate the white and the feeling of their hatred gave bitter experience in his conscious mind and heart. At last he got in confusion how long he could bear it.

Interpretation: The writer may be trying to say that education is supremely valuable ornament of life is education. Without education a man can't understand the real life or world. He also describes that where there is a will there is a way. Richard wanted to get a library card and finally he got it out. The black boy became conscious because of the white people. Richard knew that the black were not independent. He also knew that the educated Americans were behaving savagely. In this way education makes us able to read the attitude and psychology of the people which even changes our ways and even thinking of our life. It is the education which makes Richard aware of the cruelties of the whites over blacks. Hence, education makes us see the multiple forms of domination and such social evils of the society. It also makes us conscious on how we can live our life better and meaningful. The writer also reminds us that life will be incomplete without education.

Critical Thinking: After reading this story I learnt that the white people behave the Negros quite savagely. But does a wise man behave in such way? Isn't there compulsory education for all in America? Was the back's freedom really seized? Didn't the back struggle for their right and freedom? Do all people struggle so hard to get knowledge like the black? SO, I don't totally agree.



## Summaries of Flax-Golden Tales

### The Brave Little Parrot

**Literal Comprehension:** Taken from Buddhist legend, the story “The Brave Little Parrot,” carries a moral lesson at its heart. Once upon a time, Buddha was born as a little parrot. One day, there was lightning, and the thunder struck the jungle, and the fire took the jungle in its grip. The little parrot, at first, tried to save its life flying towards the river but he came to observe that his jungle-friends were captivated inside the flames of the fire. Not being able to tolerate the sufferings of animals, the little parrot made a plan to save their lives. Then the parrot went to the river, dived into it and flew back to the jungle. When it arrived at the point where the fire was the most wild, it sprinkled the few drops of water remaining in its body. Though it was too tired, the little parrot repeatedly went to the river & came back with drops of water with the hope of extinguishing fire. The Gods were passing just above the jungle at that time; they began to laugh seeing the fruitless effort of the little parrot. But the heart of one of the Gods was kindled. He took the form of golden eagle & flew towards the parrot. The eagle advised the parrot to save its life by flying away. But the little parrot replied that he needed help than any advice. The answer of the parrot melted the heart of the golden eagle, & began to weep. The tears of the eagle came down on the earth as a cool rain. The fire was extinguished. New life sprung where the tears fell on. All the dead animals & the plants got their life back as if nothing had happened in the jungle.

**Interpretation:** This beautiful story is probably trying to give the message that we can get success at the end if we continue our efforts without any hesitation. Because of its strong determination, the little parrot got victory over the deadly fire. The story is also trying to tell that selfless services are always rewarded by the God. Similarly, it also tells us that even the God has to bend its head in front of little creature like parrot if it takes the path of selfless welfare.

**Critical Thinking:** The story is successful in spreading the Buddhist philosophy of social welfare. But a lot of questions emerge in the mind of a critical reader. Do the Gods really exist in this world? Can the birds talk like human beings? Is it possible that the tears of a bird take the form of stream? Is it possible to restore the life of dead creatures? These are some of the situations in the story that are not agreeable.

**Assimilation:** The story is based on a myth. The story beautifully draws the Buddhist philosophy of ‘live and let live.’ After reading the story, I truly understood the value of living in a society. We are growing selfish these days. The story teaches us the principle of community service. The story motivates its readers to be laborious, and help the others in need. Value of brotherhood is glorified in the story.

### Ahab and Naboth

**Literal comprehension:** This story is taken from the holy Bible, the religious book of Christians. The Christians believe that there is only one God and Bible is the collection of the words spoken by the God himself.

Naboth the Jez'reelite, a citizen of Jez'reel, had a very beautiful vineyard. The vineyard was located by side of the palace of King Ahab, the king of Samaria. The eyes of King Ahab fell

on the vineyard, temptation took his heart in control. So, he went to Naboth and asked him to sell the vineyard. But Naboth denied giving it to the king because it was his ancestral property. The king became serious and stopped eating. Then, Jez'ebel- the queen- calmed him by promising to take the vineyard in possession. Then the queen wrote a letter in the name of Ahab and sent it to the nobles of Jez'reel. In the letter, it was claimed that Naboth had blasphemed God and the king, so he must be stoned to death. All the people of Jezreel gathered in a place, and put Naboth in a high place and stoned him to death.

The death of Naboth was reported to the queen. When Ahab, the king heard the news, he went to take the possession of vineyard. But, the god sent Eli'jah the Tishbite to deliver the message to the king that he has committed the crime and must face the same fate as Naboth.

**Interpretation:** Religious stories always try to show its followers the right path to truth and morality. This story also teaches its readers a moral lesson that one's sin is never hidden from the eyes of the god. A powerful person may misuse his authority to conceal his crime. But the truth is never hidden in the eyes of the god.

**Critical Thinking:** Is the story suitable for modern reader? Are the evil deeds watched by the God? There would be no crime in the world if the God treated the criminals accordingly. Can anyone witness someone stoned to death?

**Assimilation:** After reading the story, I realized that the truth can't be blurred by any power. The power may misuse its authority, but one day, it is destined to its fate. I also believe now that "god sees the truth but waits."

### **If Not Higher**

The story "If Not Higher" is written by I. L. Peretz. The story gives the message that selfless service is the path that leads someone to heavenly glory. The person who is dedicated to social service achieves heavenly glory on the earth.

The Rabbi of Nemirov would vanish in the previous night of Penitential prayers, people had the strong belief that he ascends to heaven for welfare of the people. But once, a Litvak came there and laughed at them. Pointing out the story from Gemraha, he mocks at them and said that Moses was suspended two and half feet below the heaven.

Then, the Litvak decided to test the rabbi, and secretly entered into the room of rabbi. Hiding under the bed, he remained awake throughout the whole night. At dawn, next morning, the rabbi woke up realizing the sorrow of people in Israel. Then, the rabbi disguised himself as a simple peasant. Entering into the room, the rabbi took the axe and a bundle of rope. When the rabbi got out of the house, the Litvak followed him. The rabbi, passed by the village checked every house and headed towards the jungle, cut the firewood, and returned back to the village. He stopped in front of an old hut where a lonely old woman was living. The rabbi sold the firewood for six cents. But the woman was so weak that she wasn't able to put the fire on. So, the rabbi helped her to burn the fire. When he put the firewood in the oven, he recited the first portion of the penitential prayer. When the fire was in flame, he recited the second portion of the penitential prayers, and recited the third portion of the penitential prayer when he set the fire. After observing all the events, the Litvak became the disciple of the rabbi.

## **Phaedo**

The text depicts the last moments of great philosopher, Socrates. Socrates was blamed for misleading the youths. So, he was executed. Socrates always followed the path of truth. Plato, one of the most famous disciples of Socrates records the philosophical discussion that his leader held with his other disciples before he accepted his death by drinking hemlock.

Phaedo, the disciple of Socrates, describes his last discussion to Echerates. Socrates lived his life bravely and accepted the death bravely. All of his family members and the disciple couldn't tolerate his death but he consoled them with his soothing words. He believed in his life after death. According to him death is inevitable. We have to meet the ultimate truth of death, so we shouldn't worry and get afraid of death. We should live meaningful life by following the path of truth and the god.

Socrates believed in the concept of 'hereafter.' He believed that when someone is dead, only his body is dead. The soul is eternal. After death, the soul is separated from the body and ascends to heaven. He doesn't give any importance to dead body since it is nothing after the soul is released from the body. That's why he asked his disciples to bury his dead body as they wish to bury. The god is powerful. The god only welcomes pure soul in the heaven. If we commit sinful act, the gate to heaven is closed for us. So, we should win the heavenly glory by following truth and reality in life.

As Socrates lived bravely, he accepted the death bravely. He drank the cup of hemlock happily in front of his disciples. He could save his life by begging excuses to the authority, but the truth was dearer to him than his life. Before dying, Socrates asked Crito to offer cock to Asclepius. It was the Greek custom to make an offering to the divine healer, Asclepius after recovery from illness. According to Socrates, he was recovering, not dying. He was just entering into next heavenly life. Thus, Socrates was the bravest, the wisest and the most upright man of all the time.

## **The cricket,** Pu Sung-Ling

'The cricket' is a Chinese story; it presents a detail picture of an authoritarian government. In china, during Mings reign, cricket fighting was very popular among the high officials. The magistrate wanted to win the favor of his seniors by collecting fighting specimen, and he was successful to find the one. So, floral shade was appointed as a royal supplier of the cricket to the court.

As a nature of shifting down the responsibility to the juniors, the magistrate shifted the responsibility to the neighborhood head named Make- good who was an honest man. If he became unable to collect sufficient tax, he would supply from his own pocket. So he was bankrupt within a year.

The same happened in the matter of collecting cricket. When Make-good failed to feel quota set by his higher officers, he wished to die. But his wife encouraged him finding cricket himself. The man could not find anything for the whole ten days. So, he was beaten to death. Then, a fortune teller came to the village, so the wife went to visit the fortune teller. The teller issued a sheet of paper out of the curtained room. But instead of written words, the

wife got picture only. As guided by the picture Make-good was able to find a very attractive cricket. He kept it properly, and went to work. At the same time, his nine years old son happened to release the cricket. In an attempt of recapturing the cricket, the cricket was injured and it died later. The boy was so terrified that he attempted suicide by jumping into a well. When they were going to bury the boy, there was a faint breathing. So, he was brought home. But the boy was lifeless.

Worried, Make-good went to find cricket. He found one ordinary specimen and brought home. He wanted to test the ability of the cricket, so he set a fight with local warrior cricket named Crabshell Green. To his surprise, his cricket won the fight. So, the cricket was presented to the magistrate. The magistrate again presented it to the governor, and the governor to the king. The cricket won all the fights. So Make-good received a lot of prizes from the governor. He became the rich person.

After a year, Make-good's son regained consciousness. While he received his spirit, he said that he become a cricket while he was sleeping. He become an expert warrior and learned fighting during the period.

### **The Library Card** -Richard Wright

In this essay entitled "The Library Card," Richard Wright has presented a vivid picture of his desire for reading and value of education. Wright was a Negro boy. The black people weren't allowed to borrow books from the library. One day, he read a article on H. L. Mencken. Mencken was severely criticized in the article, so Wright wanted to know why he was criticized. He decided to read the books by Mencken. So he asked an Irish catholic named Mr. Falk to provide him the library card. Richard Wright forged the signature of Mr. Falk and was able to bring two books by H. L. Mencken. He knew more about Mencken. The reading broadened his mind. The more knowledge he gained, he was able to understand the world around him. The hunger of knowledge increased, and he read a lot of books. It made him different than the other blacks. He understood why the blacks were discriminated. And similarly, he understood why Mencken was criticized.

Because of reading, Richard's attitude towards the world and his society changed. He was better able to understand the injustice and prejudices deep rooted in the society. Thus, Richard Wright sings the importance of education in this essay. Education enhances our knowledge about ourselves and the world.

### **Why Go to University?** -Moti Nissani

In this essay, Moti Nissani describes the advantages of university education. Education is extremely valuable in our life though going to university adds more problems in our life. We have to spend much time, have to spend much money for higher education. On the other hand, knowledge doesn't always bring great happiness. In some situation, ignorance is indeed bliss because knowledge increases our concerns on our surroundings, and increases our anxiety. However, education gives much in our life. It broadens our understanding, and our perspective to the life and the world is changed.

The most important advantage of education is that it creates better opportunities in our life and helps in increasing our income. The better educated we are, the higher our income tends to be. Similarly education enhances opportunities for career advancement. Without higher educational degree, the door to certain jobs promotion is simply closed. We can enjoy better life and gain social prestige because of education. More than that, the development of a country depends on its educated and skilled citizens.

Similarly higher education helps us in finding the solution to the difficulties in our life. The practical applications of education are that we can solve our daily life problems. If we have knowledge in mending motorcycle, we can save great amount of money.

Education to a great extent helps in the keep-fit process of health. We know about our body and the harmful activities that may increase chances of diseases. So, we get more cautious and try to maintain our good health. Education helps us for quality life, greater social mobility and freedom. It is said, "A sound mind in a sound body." As we exercise and keep our body fit, education sharpens our mind. It helps us for rational thoughts and increases our decisive power. Most of the cultures value educated person. He earns social prestige. An educated person can enjoy better life than an uneducated person. Similarly, education increases confidence and checks superstition. We simply can't believe on religious theories. Education makes us less dogmatic about our own belief, and increases our personal freedom. Education increases inquisitiveness in us, and broadens our knowledge on our universe. We become aware of the biosphere and eco-system.

Education is directly linked with democracy. To flourish democracy, a nation needs educated citizenry. The more rational politician we have, the more chance to peace and prosperity. The educated people can't simply fall into propaganda of politicians. They are aware of the system of the government and can check the wrong deeds if the government.

### **The Good Example,** - Vicente Riva Palacio

The story "The Good Example" is written by Vicente Riva Palacio, a Mexican freedom fighter. In this story, he presents a charming story describing the value of education, and throws satires on traditional teaching methods.

The story is set in a Mexico village and a school in the village. The school was run by Don Lucas Forcida. He was a very dedicated teacher. The learning method was teacher-centered. The student would repeat alphabet, syllabus, or the poems after the teacher. The students learned by memorizing it by heart. When the school hour was finished, Don Lucas used to share his feelings with his friend – a parrot. The parrot learned each and every thing that Don Lucas taught him. They could understand each other perfectly. The parrot also learned the children songs as well. But one day, about 10'o clock in the morning, one of the students noticed that the parrot got out of the cage and flew in the sky. The parrot vanished in the nearby jungle. Many months passed, everyone seemed to have forgotten the parrot.

Once, Don Lucas had to go to a neighboring village, nearly twenty to thirty miles away from the village. He was riding on his horse and heading towards his destination. The sun was very hot; the birds were hiding themselves inside the leaves. At the same time, Don Lucas heard the sound – children singing syllables, words and songs. At first, Don Lucas was confused, but later, he discovered that there was school inside the jungle. He stopped for a

moment, and saw that there was a flock of parrots singing in a rhythmic voice. At end of the flock, there was Perico– the parrot. The parrot happily informed his master that he also had a school.

The story can be studied as a satire on education system of that time. The writer is probably trying to say if there is memory based education, even a parrot can open a school. The teacher centered education force students to learn without grasping the basic concept. They only learn by memorizing, not by understanding it.

### **A Sound of Thunder**, - Ray Bradbury

**Literal comprehension:** The story “The Sound of Thunder” is written by Ray Bradbury. In this story, he presents a picture of our environment, and asks his reader to think about our future world. The story has emphasized on eco –balance, and evokes the reader to think about the future.

Mr. Eckles was tempted by a sign put on the wall of a safari company which claimed to take the hunter back to any time in the past and hunt any animal they wished. After paying the charge, he got into the Time Machine which would take him in the past. There were four other men with him .The machine took them sixty million two thousand and fifty five years back in the past. Eckles was surprised to see the beauty of the jungle and was eager to shoot a dinosaur. But he was warned by the safari leader not to shoot any animal without his permission. More than that, there was a path set in the jungle which was floating six inches high above the ground level ,and the path was made of anti-gravity metal . Eckles was reported that he had to be careful not to fall from the path, so that he wouldn’t touch anything in the past .Because killing one ordinary animal in the future .The life of thousands of animals would be threatened if accidentally killed an animal .Then Eckles was given the information that dinosaurs he was going to shoot has been marked earlier .The safari leader had marked the dinosaur which would die naturally shortly after. This means that they were shooting the animal with no future. But when the dinosaur came close to him, Eckles couldn’t face it and went to hide himself in the Time Machine .The hunters faught with their life and killed the dinosaur. It was shoot on the spot where it would die naturally few seconds later .Then Eckles was asked to take out the bullet from the dead animal so that no unnatural object left in the jungle in the past era .The dead body was left on the jungle to be disposed of naturally because the life of hundreds of insects depended on the dead body of that dead dinosaur.

**Interpretation:** The story may be trying to tell us something about the eco-system, eco-balance and trying to criticize the modern world .The modern people have grown selfish, they don’t think about the future. The earth has been polluted because of human activities, and global warming is increasing .By talking the readers millions years back in the past , the writer is probably trying to give the message that killing even a simple animal at the present may have devastating effect in the future.

**Critical thinking:** The story is beautiful but there are a lot of situation which are not agreeable .It is possible that we go back in the past era with Time Machine? Can anyone face the deadly animal like dinosaur? Does anyone get crazy about killing such animals like dinosaur?

### **The Cabuliwallah,** -Rabindranath Tagore

A Cabuliwallah named Rahaman reached near the house of the writer. He was a peddler and sold seasonal goods. Mini, the five years old daughter of the writer, saw him. The writer was busy on writing his story. When Mini called him, he came towards her. When Cabuliwallah came towards her house, Mini got afraid and went to her mother. But, the writer called her and introduced with Rahaman to remove her fear from her mind. The Cabuliwallah gave nuts and raisins to her. Then Cabuliwallah became a regular visitor to Mini's home. They became good friends.

Rahaman sold seasonal goods. Once he had sold a Rampuri sawl to a costumer on credit. But when he went to collect his money, the costumer didn't give the money. It made Rahaman so angry that he stabbed the costumer with knife. Rahaman was charged for attempting murder and was sent to jail for long time. When he was released from the jail, he directly went to the writer's house. There was a ceremony in the writer house. Mini was going to get married. At first, the writer didn't allow him to see her. But Rahaman gave nuts and raisins for her and gave it to the writer. He then took out the hand print of his daughter from his pocket, and declared that he also had a daughter like Mini in his house. Seeing the condition of the Cabuliwallah, the eyes of the writer filled with tears. He called Mini who was in wedding dress, and introduced with Rahaman. Rahaman was surprised to see mini grown up. He remembered his own daughter and expressed the concerns about her. The writer got sentiment, and so, he offered hundred rupees to Rahaman by reducing some of the festivities like bands and electric lights. But the writer got happy to realize, that he was helping father who is going to meet his daughter.

### **Arranging Marriage in India** - Serena Nanda

This essay is written by Serena Nanda. She is a professor of Anthropology in a college in New York. In this essay, Nanda describes how marriages are arranged in India.

Arranged marriage is very much popular in India. Even educated and prestigious families choose the process to marry their children. The writer found it very surprising that the bride and the groom hardly get any chance to have a conversation before they get married. Because she thinks that romantic love experience is important before getting married. In India, the parents seek the suitable candidate for their son or daughter. A lot of things are put into consideration such as the person's appearance, level of education, personality, family background, cultural background, caste, position in the social class, etc. The candidates may get chance to meet each other only if the parents find it suitable. There is no objection from the parents if any candidate finds it objectionable. The process may take a long time.

Serena asked an Indian girl Sita, who was a college girl graduate and whose parents were trying to find suitable boy for her, how she can silently accept the boy who is completely unknown to her. Sita replied that her parents would never ask her to marry a boy with whom she wouldn't be happy. They can take many things into consideration and would find a right match.

Serena returned to India again six years later. She found many positive aspects of arranged marriages. In America, marriages are soon broken in divorce but the marriages lasted lifetime in India. It was surprising to her. She had arranged many marriages in America, so she thought she would try one in India. One of her friends in India had a son. Though the family had a prestigious background, her son was in a military force. Many families in India would not risk their daughter's life by giving her hand to a person who is in such a risky job. But then, the boy had left his job and had joined his father's business.

Serena tried to find a reasonable candidate for him. She learned many things during the process. The mother of the boy asked Serena to consider the height and the color of her son. Serena proposed a girl who had four sisters. But the boy's family refused it saying that they couldn't have grand marriage. Serena proposed another girl but again the family found her too educated and so not suitable for their son. Another girl was rejected because of her weight and that she wore glasses. At last, Serena was successful to find a match. It took more than two years for her to find the right match. Then Serena realized why arranged marriages lasted so long in India.

### **Life Without Chiefs** - Marvin Harris

The essay is written by Marvin Harris who is a professor of anthropology at the University of Florida, USA. In this essay, he describes the evolution of human society. He says that there was no social hierarchy of ruling and ruled class longtime in history. In the beginning of human society, people had nomadic life. But they were very much generous at that time. People used to share all foods whatever available. The present-giver was never thanked for he gifts. If the receiver thanked him it was thought he calculated the contribution and thought being ungenerous. They did this because the giver may become proud and may become cruel. There was equalitarian society. If anyone wanted to be the head and tried to rule the people, the group would leave him alone and would migrate to another place.

But later, someone became the head of the society. But the head didn't use to command the members of the community. He would work harder than the others and would be more generous than the others. He would be able to give the impression to the others for being generous. He would take the bones and would give fresh and good meat to the others. So he was respected highly. The available sources of the food were divided equally to everyone in the society. Everyone had the equal reach to available natural resources, so there was a perfect communism.

Gradually, a competition started to be the headman. The person who wanted to be the headman started to work harder and collected more food. He would give feast to the people and get more supporters. At last, he would challenge the head by arranging better a feast than the head. Thus the new head was followed by the community members. The head had more collection of the food than the others, and still he was generous. But later, the division between the head and the others was created. Since the head would marry many women, he would have bigger collection of food than the others. He slowly became cruel and started to dominate the people. The chief started to build big houses for him because he had the collection of food to give to his workers. He would give food to the workers and the workers had to work for him. So, the distinction between the ruled and the ruling class was created. Humanity was lost and the ruling class became crueler and enjoyed the power. The rulers became dictators. But biologically, humans are not war-like. The division is the creation of



the cultural evolution.

### **Adaptive Failure: Easter's End** - Jared Diamond

This essay is written by Jared Diamond. He is a professor of geography and physiology at the University of California, USA. In this essay, the writer explores the reasons for the destruction of civilization in Easter Island. The end of Easter Island is an example of how we can destroy a prosperous civilization if we can't adopt the natural resources properly.

Easter Island lies in the Pacific Ocean 2000 miles west of the nearest continent, South America. It covers 64 square miles of land. The name of the island comes after its discovery by Dutch explorer Jacob Roggeveen on Easter in April 5, 1722. When Roggeveen saw the land, he only noticed grassland, ferns and shrubs. There were no trees higher than 10 feet. The larger animal found was only the insects; and the chickens were the only domestic animals the islanders had. The mysteries of the Easter Island were the heavy statues stood lining the coast. The island was prosperous and the civilization was in full bloom many years back. But, the destruction of the civilization has raised a lot of unsolved mystery.

Diamond describes the theories which explore the reasons for the destruction of the civilization in the island. The analysis of the sediments taken from depths in swamp proved that there were diverse plants and animals in the past. Pollen and DNA analysis of the animals gave the ideas about how many species of animals existed in the animals. But the islanders were unaware of the damages they were creating till they destroyed the last tree and the last edible creature remaining in the whole island. The islanders cut down the trees to make canoes for hunting porpoise in the ocean, to build houses and to bring the giant stones statues on the shore. Trees were cut down for firewood, and the fibers were used to make ropes for lifting up the heavy statues. The islanders also finished the available animals in the island. The process was so slow that they didn't notice till they were cutting down the last Palm tree available in the land. They had over-exploited the natural resources in such a way that they could no longer get any food to survive. Then their eyes turned to the largest remaining sources of food- humans. Thus, the civilization of a fertile and prosperous island came to an end.